

HOME NEWS

Civilians stop doctor from tending two assailants in Belfast

From Our Correspondent

A soldier and two civilians were injured in a shooting in west Belfast yesterday when a member of a patrol in plain clothes was attacked by two men.

The shooting, soon after lunchtime, occurred at the junction of Glen Road and Ramona Gardens. According to army sources the patrol was walking up Glen Road when two men crossed over to it and grappled with one of the soldiers, throwing him to the ground. The Army says one of the men fired at the soldier, wounding him. The other members of the patrol opened fire and hit both assailants. A group of civilians prevented a doctor from tending the assailants, who were taken to hospital. Neither is seriously wounded nor were the soldiers. It is believed that a third man was involved.

Troops were quickly on the scene and they found two rifles loaded in the house nearby. Two young children are understood to have been alone in the house at the time.

A 50lb bomb left in a dustbin in a cemetery in the same area was removed by the army. Two men are being interviewed by the police.

The incendiary explosion that hurt 12 people to death in the La Mon House atrocity has been repudiated by the police. They say it was powerful enough to destroy a fleet of buses. The fund launched for relatives of the victims of the disaster closed officially today at £140,000.

Speeches for diplomats: Opening a campaign to highlight the Dublin Government's attitude

Jail for torturers of wealthy businessman

Four men said to have tortured a wealthy businessman, they had kidnapped for a £500,000 ransom were jailed at Manchester Crown Court yesterday.

Judge Sir Rudolph Lyons said: "Had he not been rescued I cannot help wondering whether he would ever have been seen alive again."

He jailed Mohammed Kahn, described as the ringleader, for 12 years; Gul Fiaz, for 10 years; Mohammed Iqbal for nine years and Rashid Ahmed for eight years.

Mr Kahn, aged 20, of Boro-wardale Avenue, Gurnthrie, Cheshire; Mr Fiaz, aged 24, of Norfolk Court, Blackburn; Mr

to cross-border terrorism official. The party head-quarters in Belfast has posted dozens of copies of a hard-hitting speech by Mr John Taylor, former Northern Ireland Minister of Home Affairs, to all embassies in Dublin.

The decision to give them the speech, started by recent interviews given by Mr Jack Lynch, the republic's Prime Minister, to the media, comes after Mr Lynch's decision to summon ambassadors to bear a defence of his anti-terrorist record.

Mr Taylor, in his speech, made to East Down Unionists on Wednesday night, said the Dublin Government stood guilty for its contribution to the continued campaign of murder and destruction in Northern Ireland. He called on Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, the Irish opposition party, to agree to a new united approach in their relations with Ulster.

US condemnation: Eighteen prominent American democrats have issued a St Patrick's Day statement on the continuing terrorism in Northern Ireland (the Press Association reports). The signatories include nine senators, among them Mr Edward Kennedy, Mr Thomas Eagleton and Mr George McGovern. Seven Congressmen who signed include Mr O'Neill, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

They renounce any action that provides support or encouragement for those engaged in violence and condemn the violence of all individuals and extremist groups. The 18 say they are concerned over reports that some Americans are still providing assistance to what they call "the enemies of peace in Northern Ireland."

Iqbal, aged 24, of Whalley, Blackburn and Mr Ahmed, aged 24, of Oldcastle Avenue, Warrington, Manchester, were convicted of offences involving kidnapping, false imprisonment, blackmail and robbery.

Mr Rhys Davies, for the prosecution, said Mr Sabur Rahman, of Grasmere, Gately, was snatched outside a friend's home last June and bound and gagged.

He was robbed of his watch, £2,750 and \$1,000 and kept prisoner in a cupboard for 11 hours. His life was threatened and one of the men demanded a £500,000 ransom. But Mr Khan telephoned to the police and confessed.

Many interviewed dislike sanctions but feel their hand was forced by employers

Teachers angry at being undervalued and overworked

By Diana Geddes

Education Correspondent

Mr Derek Chant, aged 48, is a graduate teacher in an inner London comprehensive school with 26 years' teaching experience. He gets to school at 8.30 am and rarely leaves before 5.30 pm. Last week he did not get home until after 11.30 pm four nights running because of school meetings. He earns £6,400 a year.

You might think £6,400 is a lot," he said yesterday. "But I have friends with similar qualifications who are getting £14,000, plus a company car, expenses and other fringe benefits. I do not even get an allowance for an evening meal when I work late."

He argues that teachers are underpaid and undervalued and that society will not get the quality of education it says it wants until it is willing to pay salaries that will attract the best brains and best quality people into teaching. "And, by golly,

we do need good teachers at the moment."

Mr Chant is not a union militant. He is not even a union member. He is one of very few among the 100 teachers at Highbury Grove School who are not taking part in the sanctions called for by the two largest teachers' unions, the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers.

He believes that the sanctions are wrong, are of dubious value and are harming at least some of the children. Only the first-year children among the 1,300 pupils at the school are continuing to receive school lunches. The others are being sent out of school during the lunch-hour, although they will be supervised in the classrooms by their teaching assistants.

Mr Chant, who is one of six housemasters in charge of pastoral care, says some children are going without a cooked meal

all day as a result of the sanctions. Others are going home and not returning to school in the afternoon.

About 200 pupils in their third, fourth and fifth years tried to stage a demonstration by the school railings at the end of the lunch-hour yesterday, chanting: "We are on strike! We are on strike!" until they were sent back into their classrooms by teachers who had resumed their official duties at 1.30 pm.

Many of the teachers with whom I spoke at Highbury Grove were unhappy about the school's attitude adopted by the employers. The 9 per cent pay offer has been taken as a slap in the face. Most said they would be happy to accept a 10 per cent rise. They do not want to break the Government's pay guidelines.

Mr Ernest Bayliss, aged 60, a member of the NUT and a

housemaster at the school earning about £5,000, reflected the views of several others when he said: "I am fighting not because we are underpaid but because we are entitled to the same increase as has been applied across the country. We have been singled out because they feel we have no industrial muscle."

A recent survey by the National Foundation for Educational Research showed that the average teacher worked from 9 am to 6 pm during the term, nearly two fifths of a teacher's work was done in his or her own time during breaks, the lunch-hour and after school hours.

If weekend and holiday work was included and if that total was spread over a 48-week year (allowing four weeks for holidays), it turned out that a secondary teacher's working week lasted 40 hours, or 43 hours if a 45-minute break was

allowed for during the term. That compares with an average working week of 38.7 hours for white-collar workers. Average earnings of full-time white-collar workers, male and female, last April were £28.20 a week, or £4,672 a year. The average salary of a teacher is £5,500.

The action being taken by the teachers at Highbury Grove is fully supported by the headmaster, Mr Lawrence Norcross, who is an active member of the NUT. He says he very much regrets having to take such a step, but feels that it is necessary. Mr Norcross, who is 50 and earns £29,000 a year, is the successor at the school to Mr Rhodes. Boys only.

"We are almost the only group in that is expected to put a kind of professional morality before self-interest," he says. "No one is surprised when doctors and others take industrial action, but teachers are expected to negate self-interest, altogether."

£90,000 raised in Goulet case

More than £90,000 has been raised by the National Association for Freedom since February 17 to pay the costs of the Goulet case.

Mr John Goulet, the association's campaign director, will be able to pay on March 31 the full legal costs of the Silk-South African postal boycott case. The costs were incurred after the Law Lords had ruled last summer that the boycott was illegal and that the Attorney General alone had the power to implement the law.

Murder charge retrial

Anthony Wright, aged 28, accused of murdering Michael Holden, an actor, must be retried, Mr Justice Willis decided at the Central Criminal Court yesterday. He discharged the jury when it failed to return a verdict after being out for four hours.

Mr Wright, a general dealer, of Warner Road, Nunhead, London, was alleged to have caused the actor's death by crashing a motor car into his head in the Rose and Crown public house, Old Park Lane.

Charges over dog death

David Thomas Fensom, aged 25, of Stevenage, Hertfordshire, was committed yesterday for trial on six offences in connection with the death of a dog that was thrown from the parapet of a bridge at Julius Road, Stevenage, into the path of an express train.

Pupils face retribution after a brief revolt

By Arthur Osman

It was a day of retribution yesterday in some Midlands schools for pupils who demonstrated against the teachers' sanctions. Scores of children were caned.

At Polesworth school, Warwickshire, 50 children, including girls, who had barricaded themselves in classrooms for up to four hours, were each given two or three strokes of the cane. Two members of the fifth form were suspended as the alleged ringleaders and will be brought before the governors.

At Solihull, west Midlands, Mr Robert Fulton, head of Tudor Grange Comprehensive School, caned 20 boys and put several girls into detention for an unauthorized walk-out.

There seemed no justifiable reason for their playing truant so I decided to take tough action," he said.

An undisclosed number of children at Sandwell, West Midlands, were caned after a demonstration that led to three youths being arrested at West Bromwich.

More than 2,600 children at Telford, Salop, will not resume school until Monday. The county education department, in talks with head teachers and the local police, decided to close the schools for a "cooling-off" period because of disturbances involving the pupils of three schools.

Mr K. Pattinson, head of one of the schools, Abraham Darby, said: "I saw the boys standing in the street, shouting and banging their fists, and I was just following them. It's over now, having any dinner."

In fact the school has been supplying dinners almost normally. This pupil was ignorant of the issues involved and could not name the teachers' unions that were taking sanctions.

Outside the school, another pupil, who also refused to be named, said: "We don't like school, and it's nice to run around."

In spite of his reluctance to give his name the boy's parents will learn today of his proclivities, for the headmaster has sent letters to them explaining what the pupils had done and the disciplinary measures taken against them.

A fifth-former at the school, Michael Thomas, aged 15, said: "The pupils who cause the trouble were led by a boy who was always challenging the teachers. All they want to do is get out of school and any excuse to cause trouble is used by them. Normally discipline here is good."

Local authorities in Wales have been attacked by the big-geared teachers' union in the principality for their "bloody-minded attitude" in refusing to employ more meal supervisors.

Mr Gwyn Jones, Welsh committee chairman of the National Union of Teachers, said the education authorities should "pay for more supervisors or face the consequences. Their own attitude was largely to blame for the trouble at some schools this week."

His views, shared by most teachers in Wales, was that, for too long, the authorities have taken advantage of teachers' willingness to work for nothing. The teachers' reject suggestions that they have a moral obligation to supervise school

meals. They say that it is only because of their dedication that school authorities have been reluctant to think their responsibilities as long.

The disturbances in Welsh schools are likely to be investigated by a committee set up by the Welsh Office to investigate behavioural difficulties among Welsh schoolchildren.

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Man has typhoid

Mr Philip Hughes, aged 28, of Porthkerry, Haverfordwest, was in hospital in the town last night with typhoid fever. The area medical officer said there was no evidence that others had been infected. Mr Hughes had recently returned from Nigeria.

Court rules stretched for Mr Wedgwood Benn

West London magistrates stretched court rules yesterday so that Mr Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for Energy, could give evidence and not waste his time.

He had been summoned as a character witness for Mrs Audrey Wise, a fellow member of the Tribune Group, who denies a charge of obstructing a police officer outside the Grunwick film processing plant last summer. As the defence is to submit that there is no case to answer, no defence evidence is allowed under court rules.

Mr Robert Marshall-Andrews, for the defence of Mrs Wise, said Mr Benn had taken valuable time to attend the court hearing and give evidence.

Mr Benn was finally allowed to give evidence after waiting 40 minutes.

The prosecution said that after Mrs Wise had been told to leave the demonstration at Grunwick she grabbed a police sergeant's arm and the officer was trapped between Mrs Wise and a girl he was struggling with.

The hearing continues today.

Government will help children injured by drugs

The Government is to give priority to a scheme to help children who have been disabled by drugs or vaccination, Mr James Callaghan told the Commons yesterday. Ministers have been asked to prepare a scheme of payments for severe damage caused by vaccination for introduction soon after Easter.

Mr R. Graham Page, Conservative MP for Crosby, yesterday published his private member's Bill for "no fault" compensation to road accident victims, the scheme being financed through vehicle insurance.

Parliamentary report, page 16

Leading article, page 19

Threat to ex-Servicemen's unemployment benefit

By Henry Stanhope

Defence Correspondent

Hundreds of Servicemen who are still without jobs after being made redundant by the 1975 defence cuts face the threat of being unable to draw unemployment benefit.

Their fears rest on next month's reserved judgment in a test case brought in the Divisional Court by the Ministry of Defence.

The Ministry is urgently considering what steps to take if the judgment goes against it and has sent a circular letter to all the relevant Servicemen warning them that the special capital payment made to redundant officers and Servicemen was not a payment in lieu of future remuneration. But the National Insurance Commissioner has ruled that it is.

lieu of earnings for the next 12 months. He won his case before a local appeals tribunal at Torquay last September, but that was overruled by the National Insurance Commissioner. The Ministry backed his appeal in the Divisional Court.

It is concerned because many Servicemen volunteered for redundancy in good faith after the manpower cuts of 1975, attracted by the special payment, which for officers is equivalent to 18 months' gross pay.

The letter sent to all those concerned explains: "The Ministry of Defence has always believed that the special capital payment made to redundant officers and Servicemen was not a payment in lieu of future remuneration. But the National Insurance Commissioner has ruled that it is."

"In these circumstances and until the pending appeal is heard there is uncertainty that unemployment benefits will be allowed to ex-service applicants who have left on redundancy."

The uncertainty is worrying scores of ex-Servicemen people, who, having had one career prematurely ended have wanted to take their time over choosing their next one, especially as suitable jobs are hard to come by.

One officer, Major Jeremy Bustin, aged 37, of the 15/19 Hussars, whose redundancy takes effect from the end of this month, said at his home in Okeford, Dorset: "The question of redundancy money being held against us in this way was never voiced when the terms of our leaving the services were first laid down."

"It is a disgrace, the way that we have been treated by these people. The lower ranks are particularly affected because they find it more difficult to get another job."

This is just another example to fuel the flames of discontent which are already high enough in the Services."

The Department of Health and Social Security explained that while the right to unemployment benefit was not affected by statutory awards made under the Redundancy Payments Act, that did not apply to "golden handshakes". Unemployment benefit is paid for only one year, anyway, after which application has to be made for supplementary benefit if help is needed.

I did, however, as representatives about vending machine at Times newspaper is rejected which seems to be a 2p piece.

"These things are finely adjusted, help leave the factory," I at one stand, the "I" that when they get to everybody with a screwdriver thinks how to adjust it better."

But at a second stand told: "There is a field in the middle tests the animals to the point where they reject a line reject last night. The trouble the Royal Mint that nickel content of a recently."

You pay your own you take your choice, of course, if the mint not spit your money out

SPOT THE CASSETTE CHOSEN BY CONSUMER ASSOCIATIONS



BASF were the inventors of magnetic recording tape, and today offer the highest performing, best value cassettes on the market. BASF cassettes have been applauded above all others by consumer associations in Britain, America, Germany, Holland and France.

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Education chief to chair Schools Council

By Our Education Correspondent

Mr John Tomlinson, Director of Education for Cheshire, is to be the next chairman of the Schools Council for curriculum and examinations. Mrs Shirley Williams, Secretary of State for Education and Science, announced in the Commons yesterday. The post is unpaid.

Mr Tomlinson, who is 45 and one of the most highly considered of the 104 chief education officers in England and Wales, will take over on April 20 from Sir Alex Smith, who has resigned the chairmanship to devote more of his time to his work as Director of Manchester Polytechnic.

Caoon George Tolley, principal of Sheffield City Polytechnic, has been appointed chairman of the board of management of the Further Education Curriculum Review and Development Unit, in succession to Mr Tomlinson.

Mr Tomlinson is married, with four children.

Move to save wallabies

A campaign has been launched by naturalists to save a colony of wallabies in north Staffordshire.

Fresh inquiry into plan to demolish listed building

By Our Planning Reporter

The complex procedure for preserving historic buildings has been given added twist by the Government's decision to reopen a public inquiry into the proposed demolition of Netherdale Farmhouse, near Birmingham, Kent.

Doctor exposes death toll among asbestos workers

By John Roper

Health Services Correspondent

Seven of three of 262 workers identified two years ago as suffering from asbestosis after having worked at an asbestos factory at Hebbden Bridge, West Yorkshire, had died, a doctor concerned with the disease said yesterday.

In a lecture at the Royal College of Physicians yesterday, Dr Berran Mann, consultant chest physician at the Royal Hallam Infirmary, said the factory had been closed by the company that owned it in 1970, when the workforce was about 2,000.

The 12 per cent of the labour force who had developed asbestosis compared with a 1.05 per cent certified incidence of the disease found in the same company's factories throughout the United Kingdom.

Dearest Hansard

The price of the daily edition of Hansard, the official report of the House of Commons, is to be increased to April 1978, 33p to 40p and the weekly edition from 90p to £1.10, it was announced yesterday. The Lords' daily Hansard will go up by the same amount, the weekly edition from 65p to 80p.

Waiter jailed for hotel arson

Arnold Sanderson, aged 33, a waiter, said to have set fire to a seaside hotel eight times because he had a grudge against the hotel's management, was jailed for seven years.

Mr Sanderson, of West Monk-seaton, Whitby Bay, now divorced, denied eight charges of arson at the Rex Hotel, Whitby Bay. He said he had no grudge against the company.

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Weather forecast and recordings



Today
Sun rises: 5.11 am. Sun sets: 6.8 pm.
Moon rises: 1.59 am. Moon sets: 11.3 am.
Full Moon: March 24.
Lighting up: 6.38 pm to 5.39 am.
High Water: 7.12 am, 6.11 pm (20.0ft). 7.38 pm, 6.38 am (19.4ft).
Low Water: 1.11 pm, 9.6m (21.2ft). 12.11 pm, 5.3m (17.3ft). 5.2 pm, 5.1m (16.7ft).
A cold N stream covers the British Isles.
Forecasts for 6 am to midnight:
London, E Midlands, Central N England: Sunny intervals, occasional snow showers; wind N, fresh; max temp 6°C (43°F).
East Angles, NE, E and SE Eng: Windy showers, especially near E coast; sunny intervals; wind E, fresh or strong; max temp 6°C (43°F).
W Midlands, NW and Central S England: Mainly dry, sunny intervals; wind N, moderate or fresh; max temp 7°C (45°F).
Channel Islands: Sunny intervals, occasional wintry showers; wind N, fresh or strong; max temp 7°C (45°F).
SW England, S Wales: Sunny intervals, scattered wintry showers; wind N, moderate or fresh, locally strong at first; max temp 7°C (45°F).
Wales, NW Scotland, N Ireland, Isle of Man: Bright or sunny intervals, scattered wintry showers; wind N, moderate or fresh, backing NW; max temp 7°C (45°F).
Lakes District, Glasgow, SW Scotland: Mainly dry, sunny intervals; wind N, moderate or fresh; max temp 6°C (43°F).
Bristol, Edinburgh, Dundee, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Bright intervals, occasional snow showers; wind N, fresh or strong, becoming NW and moderate; max temp 4°C (39°F).
Shetland: Rainy intervals, snow showers; wind N, fresh or strong; max temp 2°C (36°F).



Yesterday
London: Temp max 6 pm, 8°C (45°F); min 4 am, 2°C (36°F). Humid 60 per cent. Rain, 24.64in. Sun, 24.64in. Sea: Wind N or NW, gale; sea high.
Outlook for the day: Probably dry with rain in the afternoon. Less rain becoming less likely.
Sea passages: English Strait of Dover, Calais Sea: Wind N or NW, gale; sea high.
Overseas selling prices: Australia, 22.00; New Zealand, 22.00; Hong Kong, 22.00; Singapore, 22.00; Japan, 22.00; South Korea, 22.00; Taiwan, 22.00; Philippines, 22.00; Thailand, 22.00; Malaysia, 22.00; Indonesia, 22.00; Brunei, 22.00; East Timor, 22.00; Vietnam, 22.00; Laos, 22.00; Cambodia, 22.00; Myanmar, 22.00; Bangladesh, 22.00; India, 22.00; Pakistan, 22.00; Sri Lanka, 22.00; Maldives, 22.00; Seychelles, 22.00; Mauritius, 22.00; Reunion, 22.00; Madagascar, 22.00; Comoros, 22.00; Mayotte, 22.00; French Polynesia, 22.00; New Caledonia, 22.00; Wallis and Futuna, 22.00; French Southern Territories, 22.00; British Indian Ocean Territory, 22.00; Christmas Island, 22.00; Norfolk Island, 22.00; Cook Islands, 22.00; Niue, 22.00; Tokelau, 22.00; Micronesia, 22.00; Marshall Islands, 22.00; Kiribati, 22.00; Tuvalu, 22.00; Samoa, 22.00; Tonga, 22.00; Vanuatu, 22.00; Solomon Islands, 22.00; Palau, 22.00; East Timor, 22.00; Timor-Leste, 22.00; Brunei Darussalam, 22.00; Malaysia, 22.00; Singapore, 22.00; Indonesia, 22.00; Philippines, 22.00; Thailand, 22.00; Vietnam, 22.00; Laos, 22.00; Cambodia, 22.00; Myanmar, 22.00; Bangladesh, 22.00; India, 22.00; Pakistan, 22.00; Sri Lanka, 22.00; Maldives, 22.00; Seychelles, 22.00; Mauritius, 22.00; Reunion, 22.00; Madagascar, 22.00; Comoros, 22.00; Mayotte, 22.00; French Polynesia, 22.00; New Caledonia, 22.00; Wallis and Futuna, 22.00; French Southern Territories, 22.00; British Indian Ocean Territory, 22.00; Christmas Island, 22.00; Norfolk Island, 22.00; Cook Islands, 22.00; Niue,

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The DME NEWS



bs, such as these at Churchill, near Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, fared badly in yesterday's snow, but the woman on her way to Epping station in Essex and traffic on the A11, near Epping, found the going hard (another photograph, page 9).

Safety law will bring democracy to industry

By Paul Routledge
Labour Editor

Cabinet ministers are to discuss an appeal lodged jointly yesterday by engineering unions and employers for permission to breach the pay restraint guidelines for about 30,000 low-paid workers.

Mr Albert Booth, Secretary of State for Employment, met leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilders and Engineering Unions and the Engineering Employers' Federation for talks on the industry's provisional deal that lifts minimum rates for 1,250,000 workers, improving basic pay for craftsmen from £42 to £60 a week in two stages.

At issue is a clause, inserted in the agreement at the union's insistence, that obliges employers to implement the new rates immediately. For a small minority of the labour force that would involve a breach of the 12-month rule and the 10 per cent limit on wage rises.

Mr Booth said he would have to consult senior Cabinet colleagues over the wage package and the decision is not expected before the end of next week.

Cabinet to decide on engineering claim

Privately, the employers do not expect ministers to accept the union's case.

Mr Hugh Scanlon, president of the engineering workers' union, expressed disappointment that the minister had not approved the new agreement, which, under the industry's two-tier collective bargaining system, affects only guaranteed rates, leaving most negotiations to domestic plant level. The unions are convinced that the agreement does not breach the income policy, while Department of Employment officials insist that it does.

If, as seems likely, the Cabinet refuses to permit even a tiny minority to escape the income policy, an undetermined number of the six thousand companies in the employers' federation will face local claims to get the rates introduced.

Building workers: Building employers yesterday made an offer within the guidelines of £7 to £7.50 a week to union leaders of 700,000 building workers, who said it was unacceptable. Negotiations will be resumed on March 29.

Double pay for May Day claimed

By Our Labour Editor

The first celebration of May Day as a Bank holiday looks like being expensive for national newspapers. Printing union leaders yesterday submitted a claim for double pay and a day off in lieu for 30,000 newspaper workers in Fleet Street and Manchester, arguing that last year's publication on the Queen's silver jubilee had created a precedent.

A union negotiator said: "If it was good enough for the Queen, it is good enough for the workers."

The Newspaper Publishers Association is to reply in about ten days' time. Its initial response is that the claim goes beyond present agreements and cannot be conceded. Mr Adrian Ketterer, labour relations director of the NPA, said a bargaining impasse over the demand might stop national newspapers on May 1. The unions want double pay covering 24 hours from 4 pm on April 30, about £30 for most workers for one shift, in addition to a day off.

Communists to seek broad left alliance

By Craig Seton

The new programme of the Communist Party of Great Britain, launched yesterday, forebodes the continuous development of a broad democratic alliance of the left leading to possible unity with, and affiliation to, the Labour Party.

The British Road to Socialism visualized closer links with Labour when it appeared in draft last year. It is the first important revision of the party's programme for 10 years and caused something of a schism within party ranks during months of discussion. More than 2,500 amendments were submitted and some members described it as "revisionist" and "social democratic" in tone and objective.

The rift came to a head last year when a breakaway New Communist Party was created. Yesterday, Mr Gordon McLeod, the party general secretary, denied that there was a serious split and said the new party had taken away no more than 2 per cent, or about 400 or 500 members of the party. The launch of the document was coupled with an open letter from the party to the Labour Party and labour movement, giving warning of the danger of the return of the most reactionary Conservative Party for decades at the next election.

The document says that changing the policies of the Labour Party is bound up with changing the politics of the working class. The left within the Labour Party, it says, has been unable to break the grip of the right wing, especially in the Parliamentary Labour Party.

In the socialist Britain, the policy document recommends, there would be guaranteed freedom for all democratic political parties, including those hostile to socialism, independence of the trade unions and consolidation and extension of civil liberties. Monopoly control of the press would be ended and government-owned printing facilities put at the disposal of democratic bodies.

The British Road to Socialism Communist Party of Great Britain, 20p.

Bishops aim to keep ministry in same form

By Our Religious Affairs Correspondent

The House of Bishops of the General Synod, containing all the diocesan bishops in the Church of England, has firmly rejected the argument that present circumstances require the parochial ministry to contract or to take on any radically new shape. Instead they want the church to commit itself to maintaining the ministry in its present size and form throughout the next decade.

To achieve that the bishops propose new administrative mechanisms to provide coordination in planning for the future of the ministry. Hitherto the recruitment and training of the ministry have been left to several semi-independent agencies without much central direction.

In July the General Synod will be asked to endorse the bishops' aims and on behalf of the church to declare itself committed to maintaining the ministry in its present form. That would pave the way for increased financial demands on the laity, and remove the uncertainty that is believed to be discouraging candidates for the ministry in coming forward.

The present rate of recruitment varies between about 300 and 400 accepted candidates a year. The bishops have set themselves the target of between 400 and 450 a year, which they calculate would be enough to provide a national parochial ministry of the present type.

In brief

Klan leader's appeal

Mr Anthony Reed-Herbert, the solicitor acting for Mr David Duke, the Ku-Klux-Klan leader, said yesterday that he had been instructed to fight Mr Duke's appeal against the Home Office variation order, in the House of Lords if necessary.

The order, requiring Mr Duke to leave Britain within 14 days, was served on Tuesday. The first stage, an appeal before the Home Office adjudicator, is expected to be heard soon.

Mining inquiry ends

A public inquiry into an appeal by Whitby Potash for renewal of planning permission to mine in the North York Moors National Park ended yesterday. About fifty witnesses gave evidence during the five-week hearing.

Sugar chief sued

Mr John Oliver Lyle, head of Tate & Lyle, the sugar company, is being sued in the High Court by Mr Anthony Thomas, independent producer of the Associated Television documentary series, *The South African Experience*, who alleges slander and libel.

Honey bear cleared

A honey bear from South America, over which there was a rabies scare in Hull when it was landed illegally from a ship a fortnight ago, has been cleared.

Ban on Gary Glitter

Gary Glitter, the pop singer, was banned from driving for 18 months by magistrates at Salisbury yesterday and fined £100 for driving with excess blood alcohol.

Testers force judge to give bench in rape case

A Cheltenham man, aged 21, had been found not guilty by a jury of nine men and three women of raping the model in his room.

The judge said in summing-up that the jury might think it was foolish for a young woman to get a lift for a long distance. But in these days there are a lot of independent women about, he said.

The judge said in summing-up that the jury might think it was foolish for a young woman to get a lift for a long distance. But in these days there are a lot of independent women about, he said.

Council tenants 'should be allowed to improve homes'

By Our Planning Reporter

Council tenants should be given freedom to improve their homes as they see fit, Professor Christopher Foster, Director of the Centre for Environmental Studies, said yesterday.

"They should not have to wait on the council for improvements, or accept the standardised improvements that the council wants put in, or pay through increased rents for

work which in part they could do for themselves", he continued. "If one householder can or wants to afford improvements that his neighbour does not be should be allowed to do so."

An outgoing tenant would receive compensation for any additional value he had conferred or, alternatively, pay "disappearances" if it was judged that the value had been lowered.

Professor Foster, who was

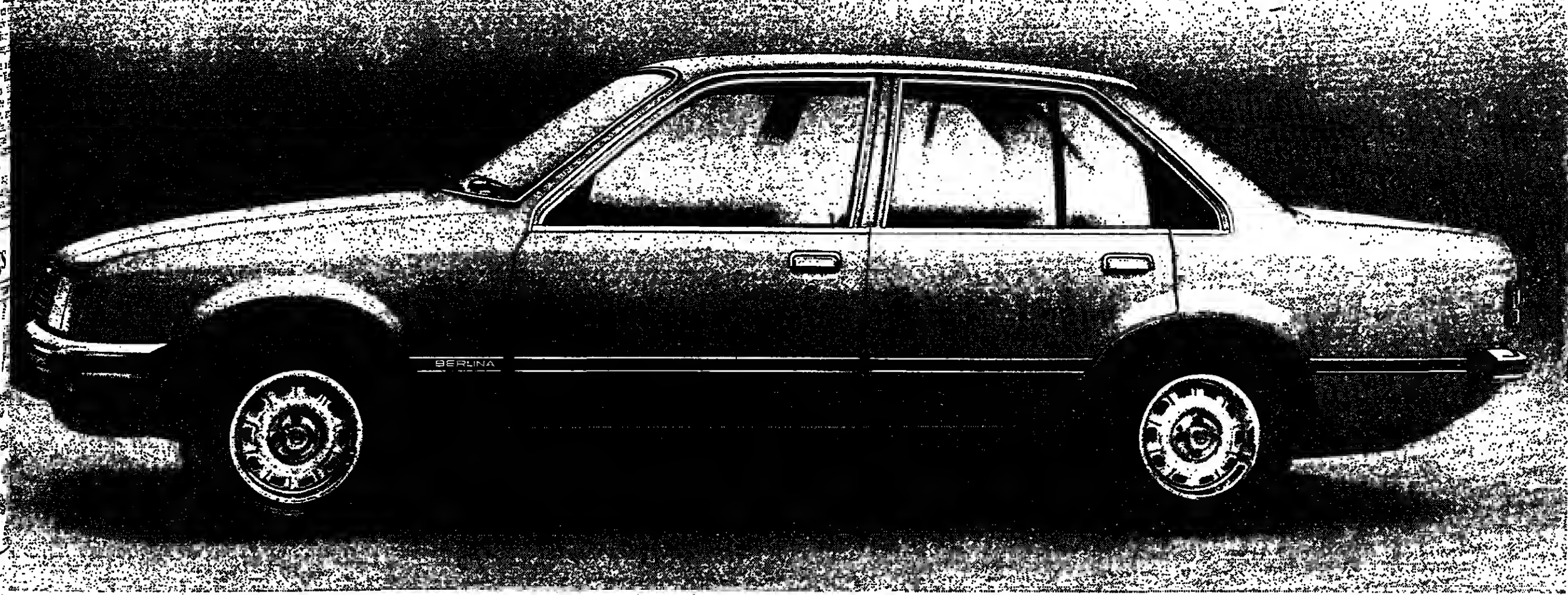
speaking at the annual luncheon in London of the National Home Improvement Council, suggested that opposition would come from a few people who had been used to prescribing the repairs, maintenance and improvement that should take place in tenants' houses.

"A major fear for the next 10 to 20 years must be that large portions of the local authority housing stock will deteriorate into second-class dwellings, even into slums", he

said. "I believe that, to preserve the local authority sector for many who do not particularly want the responsibilities of ownership, it is imperative that as far as possible they have control over the improvement of their property as much as an owner-occupier does."

Housing loans: The Housing Corporation's minimum unit targets for new building and for improvements, mentioned in an agency report yesterday, are 15,760 and 15,330 respectively.

The new Opel Rekord. A great shape for a big car to be in.



The new 2-litre Opel Rekord didn't get to look good by chance. Those clean, sleek lines are purely the result of an exhaustive wind-tunnel testing programme designed to cut down wind resistance. Which means better consumption, better handling and a quieter ride.



That sort of concern is typical of the way we set about creating the new Rekord.

In great shape under the bonnet. First we agreed a 2-litre capacity was just right for the majority of motorists who want big car performance plus realistic running costs. So the Rekord delivers 0-60 in 10.5 secs with a top speed in excess of 100 mph. (What Car? figures)

In great shape inside. Now for around £4,500, you're entitled to expect quite a lot, not just under the bonnet, but inside the car as well. We're in great shape there too. Settle yourself in and you're immediately struck by the feeling of space and quiet luxury. As Car magazine said, "their upholstery is so cleverly controlled in its spring and resistance as to give an uncommonly even distribution of pressure on body and thighs, as well as complete isolation from the motions communicated by the car's running gear." By which Car mean it's very quiet and comfortable indeed. And they summed up, comparing the new Rekord with the Ford Granada: "both cars ride



well, but the Opel is notably the better."

In great shape for the driver. Now a look from the driver's eye view. There's a practical, uncluttered dash with easy-to-read, non-reflective instruments and easily identified controls. Apart from the obvious, you have a 2-speed windscreen wiper (with intermittent action), quartz controlled clock, cigar lighter, illuminated heater controls and halogen headlights. The top-of-the-line Rekord Berlina HL also boasts electrically operated windows, velour covered

rear seat headrests, sun roof, headlamp wash/wipers, tinted glass and rich velour upholstery.

In great shape for servicing. Spares are no problem either, thanks to Opels highly sophisticated, computerised spares network. As for servicing, the new Rekord needs only 3 hours spent on it a year for the average motorist - something most manufacturers would give their right arm to be able to claim.

Now you've had your first look at the new Rekord Saloon we'd like you to see it - and the Estate - in real life. Just ring 01-580 5221 and we will send you a free brochure and the name of your nearest dealer. He'll be pleased to arrange a test drive.



Keep your options Opel.

HOME NEWS

Bank replies to judge's criticism of payment

Lloyds Bank replied yesterday to criticism by Judge Mark Smith at Kingston upon Thames Crown Court the previous day that it had allowed a pensioner to withdraw large sums without question.

Mr Ernest Pegilley, aged 80, of Kingston Road, Raynes Park, London, had been under pressure for the money, more than £6,000, to pay a bogus roofing contractor.

The bank was invited by the judge to reply to his criticisms. Mr Simon Tuckey, for the bank, said it was under no duty to inquire how clients were to spend their money. He added: "In many cases a customer would be offended to be asked how money drawn was to be spent."

The bank, at Raynes Park, had done all that was tactfully possible to find out why Mr Pegilley needed so much.

The judge wondered if "a word by the bank to the police might have saved this man his money". Mr Tuckey said they would study the confidentiality between a bank and its customers. The judge said he would not retract his remarks.

Apology sought: The Union of Bank Employees yesterday demanded an apology from Judge Smith (the Press Association reports). It said his remarks were quite unwarranted.

"The staff concerned carried out their proper duties in giving the money to the customer, and it is quite unfair to imply otherwise."

Minister learns of research into vibration

Noise council's advice to airline

From Alan Hamilton
Southampton, March 16

It obligingly snowed in Southampton yesterday for the arrival of Mr Denis Howell, minister in charge of droughts and floods, to perform another of his governmental functions, that of minister of noise. He maintained his enviable record of success in controlling the weather: it snowed quietly.

Mr Howell, who, as Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, is chairman of the Noise Advisory Council, announced that it would be urging British Airways not to buy any new aircraft for its short and medium haul fleets until a new generation of quieter engines became available in the early 1980s.

The council will suggest that the 19 replacement aircraft British Airways says it will need in the near future should be leased or bought secondhand,

so that they can be disposed of in favour of quieter aircraft at minimum expense. Any new aircraft bought by the airline should conform to the strict noise standards laid down by the International Civil Aviation Organization in 1976, the council recommended.

Mr Howell and the council met in Southampton yesterday to visit the Institute of Sound and Vibration Research at Southampton University, which is studying the effects of environmental and industrial noise, and is one of the few centres of research into the effects of vibration on the body.

Although legislation is in the pipeline to establish a maximum noise level of 85 decibels in factories, and more than 200 successful claims for industrial deafness compensation have been brought to court in the past five years, many with the backing of the Southampton institute, vibration is not yet officially recognized as a hazard.

Dr Michael Griffin, lecturer in human factors at the institute, demonstrated to Mr Howell his laboratory full of vibrating chairs, and explained that the deleterious effects of vibration varied from "white finger", a condition similar to frostbite, to the difficulty of drinking coffee on a train.

Dr Griffin, chairman of a British Standards Institute subcommittee looking into vibration, hopes eventually to see legislation introduced to protect workers at risk. The European Commission has recently agreed to study vibration under pressure from Southampton.

It will cost an estimated £4,000 for each of the 500,000 British workers exposed to unacceptable noise to bring their machines in line with the 85 decibels recommended by the Health and Safety Executive.

Mr Howell was also facing exposure to noise and vibration: he had to hurry back to Westminster for the division bell.

£84 fare quoted for Los Angeles Skytrain

By Arthur Reed
Air Correspondent

Laker Airways would offer a single fare of £84 between London and Los Angeles if its plan for a Skytrain service between the two cities was accepted, the Civil Aviation Authority was told in London yesterday.

Aviation industry observers concluded that the reduction was a riposte to the £69 "eleventh-hour" fare an-

nounced last week for the same route by the other big British airline operating from Gatwick airport, British Caledonian.

The single fare by Laker in the opposite direction would be £112, making a round-trip fare of £196.

Making the submission to the authority yesterday, Mr Robert Beckman, for Laker Airways, said the reductions were contingent on airlines such as British Airways and Trans World obtaining permission to

offer cheap stand-by and budget fares on the route.

Mr Beckman asked the authority for permission to begin a Los Angeles service on September 26, the first anniversary of the Skytrain service to New York.

The Laker application was opposed by British Caledonian on the ground that it already possessed the British licence to fly to Los Angeles, although it does not operate on the route at present.

Whitehall denies that it has study papers

By Peter Hennessy

The Civil Service Department has refused a formal request from *The Times*, arising from the Prime Minister's open-government policy announced last July, that background material used in the preparation of the White Paper on the Civil Service should be disclosed. The department has replied that no such papers exist.

In a letter dated July 6, last year, and approved by Mr James Callaghan, Lord Croom, then Sir Douglas Allen, Head of the Home Civil Service, wrote in 51 heads of government departments urging them to publish as much background material as possible from policy studies once the decisions based upon them had been announced.

"When policy studies are being undertaken in future the background material should as far as possible be written in a form that would permit it to be published separately with the minimum of alteration, once a ministerial decision to do so has been taken," he said.

Two months later the Commons Select Committee on Expenditure reported after an 18-month investigation of Whitehall. Departments began to compile replies to its 162 recommendations coordinated

by an official committee chaired by Lord Croom (later by his successor Sir Ian Bancroft) and an ad hoc Cabinet committee under the Prime Minister.

A study of the resulting White Paper this week, which reaffirmed the Government's policy of openness in paragraph 44, suggested that material for its compilation had been prepared by the management, management staff, and pay groups of the Civil Service Commission, the Exchequer and Audit Department, 10 Downing Street and the general expenditure side of the Treasury. It was those background papers that *The Times* was interested in obtaining.

The Civil Service Department replied that Wednesday's White Paper was not a policy study but a reply to a Select Committee report whose volumes of evidence represented the background material. The White Paper had not been compiled on the basis of background documents but had proceeded through successive drafts with various departmental and policy divisions contributing a chapter. The early drafts could not be disclosed.

The Civil Service Department is responsible under the letter of last July for exhorting other departments to comply with the policy and to keep a record of its results. The department indicated yesterday that it had such a list details of which will appear in *The Times* shortly.

WEST EUROPE

European Parliament votes to keep EEC farm price rise to 2%

From David Wood
Strasbourg, March 16

Resisting pressure in the European Parliament for an increase in EEC farm prices from 2 per cent to 5 per cent, Mr Finn Olav Gundelach, the Commissioner for Agriculture, delivered a warning that taxpayers were reaching the limit of tolerance and the common agricultural policy was at stake. The 2 per cent increase for 1978-79 has been recommended by the Brussels Commission, and the political decision on the price package will be taken by the Council of Ministers at the end of April.

A majority of the European Parliament, however, voted in support of the Commission's 2 per cent "farm price increase, although they also carried an amendment refusing any increase to farm commodities that are in surplus, including milk and sugar.

It was a partial parliamentary victory for MPs opposing the over-production of agricultural surpluses, fighting to curb inflation and protecting EEC consumer interests.

But British farmers still have the consolation that a 2 per cent increase in farm prices, after due allowances for soft currencies, represents an increase of more than 5 per cent.

Within the Parliament the Socialists, European Conservatives and Communist groups, concerned for the consumer and control of inflation, supported the Commission.

The Christian Democrats, European Progressive Democrats (an alliance of French and Irish MPs) and Liberal groups broadly demand 5 per cent, as recommended in the report from the Parliament's agricultural committee.

"I will not mince words", Mr Gundelach said in closing a two-day debate. "What we are trying to do is to avoid

putting agriculture in a moderate agricultural policy, and certainly should be no illusion of Community surplus, exported, leaving the cost to the taxpayer, exported from the EEC, than in any other world market.

MPs' triumph. Mr Gundelach, however, ordered champagne lunch as he celebrated some European MPs' victory. He himself described the vote as a "triumph" for the Commission's 2 per cent increase, but added that the European Parliament had back an average 2 per cent in farm prices instead of 5 per cent which the agricultural committee was advocating.

We're not yet at a point where consumers' interests are at stake, but it is along the path," he said. Michael Barnard, writing in *Brussels*, said that EEC farm prices increased by only 1 per cent in real terms last year.

European Commission said in a report released last week that the Commission's 2 per cent increase would be 2.6 per cent in 1978.

The low increase is due in part to the legacy of 1976 drought, coupled with heavy falls of farm output in the first half of the year. The Commission's report also noted that the 1977-78 crop was 12 per cent below the 1976-77 level.

Whereas real farm prices are estimated to have risen by 5.2 per cent in 1977, the average in 1978 is estimated to be 2.6 per cent in West Germany, 2.6 per cent in France, 10.9 per cent in the UK and 21.5 per cent in Ireland. There was no rise in the Netherlands.

These disparities will make it more difficult to increase EEC farm prices for 1978-79 than for 1977-78, which was decided by the European Council.

Parliamentary report.

Cabinet urged to resign over Schleyer bungle

From Patricia Clough
Bonn, March 16

The Opposition today demanded the West German Government's resignation over police mistakes in handling, and eventually losing, vital clues to the whereabouts of Hanns-Martin Schleyer, the president of the employers' association kidnapped and murdered by terrorists last autumn.

Herr Alfred Dregger, the Opposition spokesman on internal affairs, told Parliament that Herr Schmidt, the Chancellor, bore full responsibility for the mistakes which had perhaps cost Herr Schleyer his life. Tip-offs from alert citizens which might have enabled the police to save him had been lost.

The Government, he said, had not been prepared for an emergency, the police command and information system had not worked. Moreover, the Government had not learnt from the case and would be equally unprepared if a fresh terrorist attack occurred.

The Government, he declared in a stormy debate, was no longer capable of running the country. "Let us take over the Government. We can do it better."

The Chancellor rose to reject an accusation levelled

by Herr Dregger, denying his responsibility for the mistakes, and with Opposition against his hasty conclusions. The case before the Bundestag independent investigation available.

The debate was the monetary aftermath to a covertly that while police searching all Europe for Schleyer, a vital tip-off from a Hamburg resident, Alfred Dregger, near Düsseldorf, had been held up and lost in the police communications system.

Had it gone to the destination the police would have found him in a hotel, where he was held for three days.

The hide-out was a kind of place where he was looking for, a huge anonymous flat, where he knew anyone else, an underground garage, an unsecured entry and an easy access to the main fast autobahn.

According to the reconstruction of what went wrong, the slip-up was due to a confusion of a tence between the head of North-Rhine-Westphalia, the Federal Criminal Police, which was coordinated search.

Poverty-level claim is denied by Bonn

From Our Own Correspondent
Bonn, March 16

The Federal Labour Ministry has sharply denied a claim by Herr Georg Götter, Rhineland-Palatinate Minister for Social Questions, that about half of West Germany's unemployed are living below the officially defined poverty level.

No more than 50,000 unemployed—not between 300,000 and 700,000 as claimed by Herr Götter—were living on social assistance, Herr Götter was wrong also in calculating that this assistance fell below the officially recognized minimum income needed for a decent human existence.

Portugal sends corvette to stranded

From Our Own Correspondent
Lisbon, March 16

The Portuguese Navy sent a corvette to the aid of a Portuguese military aircraft off the coast of the Western Sahara, by Morocco.

The national news agency ANP said that the corvette, the *Corvette de Guerra*, had sent a message to the military aircraft, saying that it was broken down and it was water north of the islands.

The agency said that the corvette had been on a machine-gun fire, sent ago off the coast of the Sahara—UPA.

Paris and Bonn fear legal action by citizens over VAT

From Michael Horneby
Brussels, March 16

France and West Germany are seeking a retrospective extension of the deadline for introducing a uniform basis throughout the EEC for assessing value-added tax (VAT). They fear that they could be taken to court by the European Court of Justice for breach of Community law.

The VAT directive was adopted by EEC member states last May and should have been in force since January 1 of this year, but in fact only Britain and Belgium completed the necessary procedures in time to meet the deadline.

Introduction of the directive would have made it possible for the EEC budget this year to have been partly financed for the first time from the receipts of VAT levied at a rate of up to 1 per cent on a

common list of goods and services. This, in turn, would have made it possible for the other two already in force to use their own resources to fund receipts from commercial imports and levies on imported agricultural products.

The French and the Germans are worried that citizens could sue their governments for going to court because of VAT, and that the VAT directive would have been partly financed for the first time from the receipts of VAT levied at a

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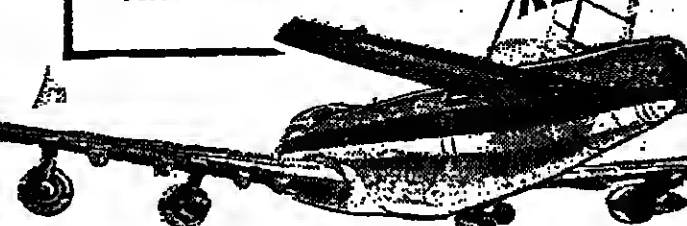
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Parliamentary Europe Ecologists hold key to victory in an unusually balanced poll

The French Elections

M. Georges Marchais, the Communist leader, said on television today that the President had gone back to the Middle Ages in trying to put the 20 per cent of French Communist voters into the category of a national danger.

If the left won the Communists would take 112 of the 260 seats won by the three common programme partners and they would not prove a danger.

M. Marchais's figures, if realized, mean that he believes he will be in a position to claim almost half of the ministries in a government of the left.

With both sides fighting a war of confidence, it is clear that they are worried about losing the important vote of those who support the minor parties which did not win through to the second round. The Ecologist vote in some 12 constituencies—enough to form a majority in such an evenly balanced election—could well be decisive.

Although the group fell some what short of its expectations and scored only an average of 2.14 per cent of the vote, this amount will be enough to win a seat. The Ecologist leaders have so far refused to give any advice to their supporters beyond saying that they should vote for the candidate whose programme is most sympathetic to their cause.

The failure of the Ecologists to maintain the support they won in last year's municipal elections is one of the interesting features of the campaign. It shows that while there is a widespread feeling in favour of the cause it is not sufficient to persuade voters to support it when national rather than local politics are involved.

Charles Hargrove, page 18

Signor Moro becomes Europe's most illustrious victim of terrorism

Man of tormented sadness and legendary patience sums up Christian Democratic ideals

From Peter Nicholson
Rome, March 16

Five times Prime Minister, architect of Christian Democracy's long-term policies of opening first towards the Socialists and now, to the Communists, Signor Aldo Moro changes today from being the most illustrious Christian Democrat to become the most illustrious victim in Europe of political terrorism.

The terrorists could scarcely have struck harder. They claim, themselves, to have carried the battle to the heart of the state. They have also carried it to the heart of the perpetually governing body.

Signor Moro, who is 61, sums up the ideals and many of the more fascinating elements in Christian Democratic behaviour. He carries stamped on his features the tormented sadness of the Deep South and a legendary patience which sometimes makes him seem indecisive, sometimes uninterested in the mere mechanics of government and at other times focusing his thoughts on strategic ideas for the remote future, all supported by strong but intensely private inner convictions of which his religious observances are a powerful ingredient.

He was in fact kidnapped after his daily visit to a small church near his home. From church, he was about to attend a parliamentary debate due to seal his latest and most remarkable political victory.

Signor Moro has for long been seen for ever—been convinced

that Italian democracy must depend on an understanding which would allow the Communists a share of responsibility. As chairman of the party with a leadership beneath him which shares his outlook, he was the brooding, reserved but determined head guiding the party's course.

But the leadership encountered unexpectedly strong opposition from within Christian Democratic ranks to the idea of forming a government supported formally and officially by the Communists. Such support had been unknown since the early years of the republic.

The opposition was on two lines: that communism should be kept at arm's length and that the seemingly immovable old leaders of the party, including Signor Moro, should be persuaded to allow younger men to take over.

Signor Moro needed all his skill and political finesse to persuade the Christian Democratic parliamentarians to approve the type of government he favoured: a minority Christian Democratic administration supported by, among others, the Communists.

He is the great advocate of dialogue in politics, not strong divisions of the "choral" form of democracy as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon style of duet between government and opposition. He wanted the left within, not outside, the system.

This naturally leads to the possible explanations of why he should have been chosen as the terrorists' victim. The first



Signor Aldo Moro: Strong inner convictions.

is simply his eminence. Terrorists in Italy, whoever they may be, have to force up the element in their activities of being able to astonish if they are to shock public opinion effectively.

If they wanted both to strike at the political system and astonish the public, Signor Moro was their man.

Secondly, they may be acting, either on their own behalf or on behalf of others, to halt the policies for which he has worked so thoroughly. A

possible but unlikely third explanation is that his kidnappers are actually in favour of his policies and want to force the pace by which the Communists are brought into government by creating a situation of emergency.

Political reactions have been fairly cool in maintaining that foreign agents are involved. Signor Zamberletti, an intelligent Christian Democrat who was in the past involved as a junior minister in Italy's intelligence system, made some stimulating remarks concerning Nato.

It was heard to say that De Gaulle left Nato because of a dozen attempts on his life and that France since, and by implication as a result, has managed to keep its terrorism under control.

Others see the interference as from the Communist World. Signor Battaglia, a Republican and former Under-Secretary at the Foreign Ministry, states quite clearly that the guiding hand should be sought in the East.

A factor which may well have contributed heavily to the success of this and other terrorist designs is the co-fusion in Italy's own counter-espionage service. Officers and agents of the old security services allegedly have been involved in a questionable way in attempts by the extreme right to use violent means against the country's democratic institutions.

Italy's own breed, page 18
Leading article, page 19

World leaders voice shock at abduction

The British Government was "shocked and horrified" by the kidnapping of Signor Aldo Moro, the former Italian Prime Minister, a Foreign Office spokesman said in London last night.

"Everyone must condemn such a senseless act and wish for his safe return", he said in a statement.

Mr Callaghan, the Prime Minister, sent a message to Signor Giulio Andreotti, his Italian opposite number, expressing shock at the kidnapping.

He also sent a private message of sympathy to Signora Eleonora Moro.

Mrs Thatcher, the Opposition leader, sent a telegram to Signor Andreotti expressing her shock. "Our sympathy and understanding are with you now and during the difficult time ahead", the message said.

Washington: President Carter expressed shock at the kidnapping of Signor Moro and said millions of Americans were praying for his safe return.

In a letter to President Leone he said: "I was shocked to hear of the terrorist kidnapping. This outrage deeply affects all of us."

Mr Cyrus Vance, the Secretary of State, called the kidnapping "an insane and brutal act of terrorism."

Moscow: The Soviet news agency Tass blamed the "forces of reaction" for the kidnapping of Signor Moro and suggested that the action was aimed at preventing Communist

participation in the Italian Government. President Giscard d'Estaing sent a telegram to President Leone saying that his country had learnt of the kidnapping "with great emotion". The French people were unanimous in their feeling of repugnance against this act of terrorism.

He promised his total support for the fight against "an act which, through the person of Signor Moro, attacks the very principles of democracy".

M. François Mitterrand, the Socialist leader, said on Italian television that the kidnapping represented a blow to democracy and the rights of men, while M. Georges Marchais, the Communist leader, expressed his "total indignation".

Rome: The Pope, ill with influenza, deplored the kidnapping in a telegram to Signora Moro: "We pray to the Lord to move the hearts of the authors of this tragic attempt and return your dear husband unharmed."

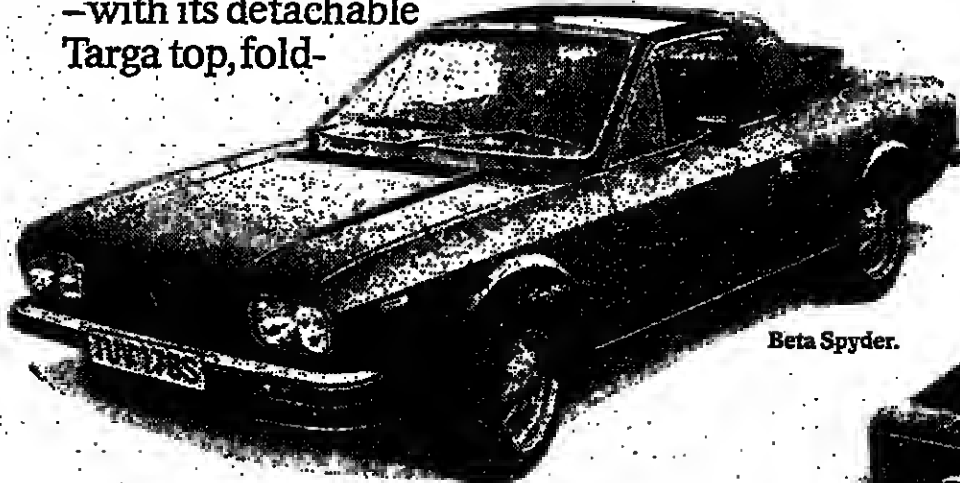
New York: Dr Kurt Waldheim, the United Nations Secretary-General, condemned the kidnapping and expressed hope for his early release.

Berlin: Herr Peter Lorenz, the West Berlin politician who was kidnapped in 1975 and later released in exchange for the release of a group of jailed anarchists, said he was grieved and angry at Signor Moro's abduction.

Madrid: Señor Suárez, the Spanish Prime Minister, voiced his "solidarity and friendship" in a message and expressed the hope that Signor Moro would be freed soon.

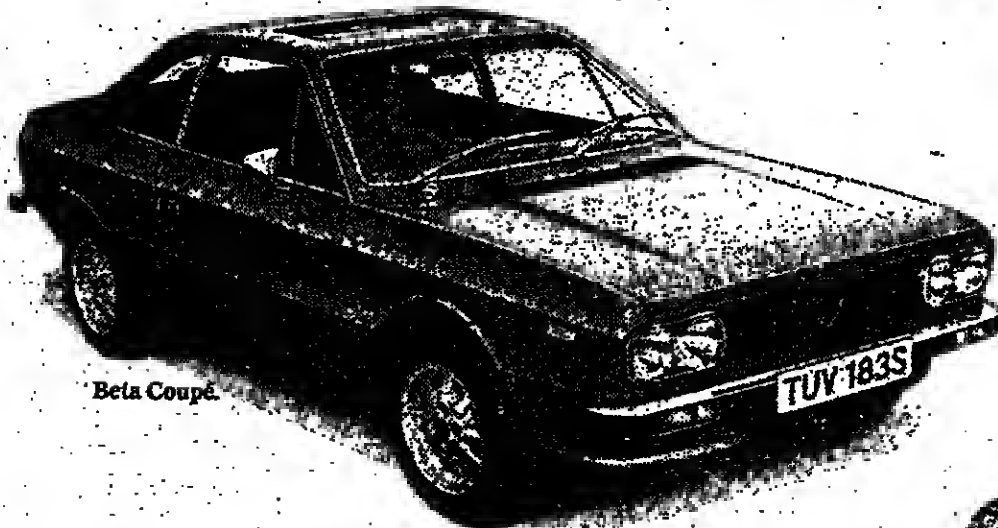
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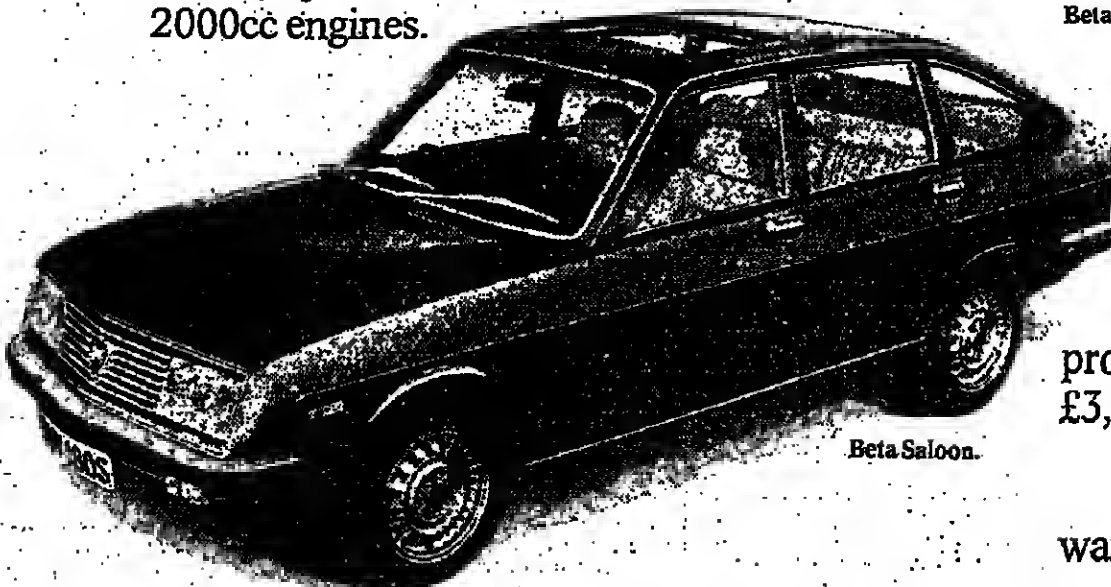
Beta Spyder.

back rear window, 5-speed gearbox and all. It'll make you lots of lovely friends (there's even room for two in the back), whether you have the 1600 or 2000cc version.



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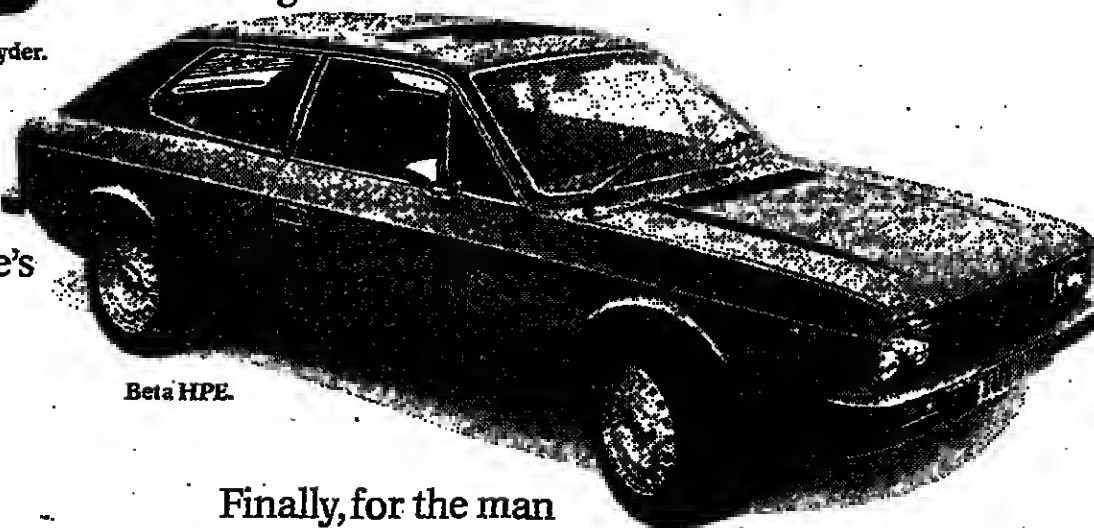
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*Prices include VAT at 8% and car tax, inertia reel seats and 400cc extra charge (UK mainland) but exclude number plates. Prices from Beta Saloons - £3,292.38, Beta Coupé - £3,760.38, Beta Spyder - £4,927.22, Beta HPE - £5,927.22. The Beta Monte-Carlo costs £5,927.22. Personal Export: If you are eligible to purchase a Lancia free of taxes, contact our Export Department.

Urged to ask layer but lovers support

Own Correspondent
Amsterdam, March 16
Rostropovich, the Soviet pianist, today he only shocked by the Soviet authorities' decision to strip him of his citizenship.

Decision of the Soviet authorities, deprived of his Soviet passport, to live and to die in his adopted country, Mr Rostropovich's wife, Galina Vishnevskaya, the opera singer, wrote in a statement to the press.

He said they could be asked for their activity in a country which, with a stroke of a pen, could strip them of their citizenship and being given the right to defend themselves.

A climber died

March 16.—A climber yesterday fell 6,300ft from a rock face in northern France and escaped with a serious injury.

Portuguese corvette stranded

Spencer, aged 23, and his brother, who was 27, were forced to fight in the open as the corvette was hit by a 240lb bomb. Spencer was killed and his brother was seriously injured.

Bonn fed citizens

correspondent
March 16.—"Substantial progress" towards a treaty on nuclear disarmament was announced here by the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain. A joint statement on nuclear disarmament today, Mr Derick British delegate, said important points had been agreed since the eight months ago. The statement was signed by the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain. It said that the treaty was being signed by the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain. It said that the treaty was being signed by the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain.

OVERSEAS

Cuban forces likely to intervene in war against Eritreans

From Charles Harrison
Nairobi, March 16

Diplomatic sources in Addis Ababa say they expect a considerable Cuban involvement in the war in Eritrea.

Large Cuban forces which were airlifted into Ethiopia between December and February 1977, have been deployed mainly in the Ogaden but the lightning advance of Ethiopian forces, led by Cubans and Russians, and the withdrawal of Somali regular forces from the Ogaden, has left the Cubans with little to do.

The Cubans are still leading the Ethiopian reoccupation of the Ogaden but most of the key areas have already been retaken from the Somalis. There remains the need to counter guerrilla activity from scattered units of the Western Somali Liberation Front but conventional warfare has ceased, the diplomats said.

Yesterday's *Pravda* commentary in Moscow, justifying the support of communist countries for the Ethiopian regime in Eritrea, is regarded as a sign that decisions have already been taken to move many of the Cubans and Russians to the Eritrean front.

Diplomatic sources said some Cuban troops had already arrived in Asmara, which has been surrounded by rebel forces for months. These forces, airlifted into Asmara, have already begun to probe the strength of the rebel positions around the city.

The Eritrean Liberation Front claimed last month that 2,000 Cuban troops had been sent to Asmara. While that report was regarded as premature, it now appears that this number of Cubans could soon move into Asmara.

Yesterday the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) reported that Ethiopian forces had launched a probing attack from Asmara, intended to prepare for clearing the road to the Red Sea port of

Massawa. But the EPLF said this was designed to test the strength of the rebel forces before a full-scale attack could be launched against them.

Until now, the Cuban attitude has been that the Eritrean revolt is an internal Ethiopian affair. But it appears that this attitude is changing.

Havona, March 16.—Cuban officials held a secret meeting with Somali and Ethiopian leaders in Aden a year ago during which Somalia promised not to invade its neighbour, President Castro said last night.

He said in a televised speech in eastern Cuba that his government called the meeting, which was also attended by South Yemen leaders, in an attempt to avoid a Somali-Ethiopian conflict.

"During the Aden meeting the Somali leadership solemnly swore they would never invade Ethiopia. In reality they already had everything planned. They began their aggression in June," Dr Castro said.

It was the first official confirmation that Cuba, which later sent troops to support the Ethiopians, had attempted to mediate between the two countries before the outbreak of hostilities in the Ogaden region.

Two days ago Cuba admitted for the first time that its soldiers and airmen had helped to turn the tide of the war against Somalia. "We are sincere supporters of peace between the countries," he said.

But he added: "This is supporting the aggressions by Somalia against Ethiopia are not repeated."—Reuter.

Mogadishu, March 16.—Mr Miroslav Milic, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, arrived here today on a two-day visit which is seen by observers as a mediation between Somalia and Ethiopia. He arrived from Addis Ababa and was later to go to Sudan.—Agence France-Press.

Anglo-US-Rhodesian talks in Pretoria today

From Nicholas Ashford
Johannesburg, March 16

Senior British, American and Rhodesian officials are to meet in Pretoria tomorrow in an attempt to win support for the latest Anglo-American proposals for a new conference involving all the parties involved in the Rhodesian conflict.

The meeting will take place in the British Embassy tomorrow afternoon and may continue until Saturday. It will be attended on the British side by Mr John Graham, Deputy Under-Secretary at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mr Henry Steel, a Foreign Office legal adviser, and Sir David Scott, the British Ambassador to South Africa.

The Americans will be represented by a senior member of the United States Embassy staff, Mr Jay Taylor, and the Rhodesians by Mr Jack Gaylard, the Secretary to the Cabinet.

There was some confusion as to who was responsible for calling the talks. The Rhodesians said the purpose of the meeting was to explain to the British and Americans, details of the internal settlement signed in Salisbury two weeks ago. But it seems that the initiative came mainly from the British and Americans who are now trying

to drum up support for a new conference.

The aim of the conference would be to bring together the parties to the month's Malta meeting (the British, Americans and the Patriotic Front guerrilla leaders), and the signatories of the Salisbury agreement (Mr Ian Smith, the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the Reverend Ndlovu, the South African Minister of Defence, and Chief Jeremiah Chitau).

So far, every Rhodesian group has rejected the idea of a new conference. However, the fact that the Rhodesians have agreed to take part in tomorrow's meeting is an indication that their participation at such a conference should not entirely be ruled out.

Similarly, according to reports from New York, the Patriotic Front has also modified its attitude towards the latest Anglo-American proposals. It has indicated that it will consider a conference-style conference if the British and Americans first agree to have another meeting with the Front.

Tomorrow's meeting takes place in the wake of this week's United Nations Security Council resolution that the Rhodesian internal settlement was illegal and unacceptable.

Privileges won by tricking Soviet dignitaries

Continued from page 1

did not know him as a minister to them he was a senior journalist from Moscow.

In fact he was neither journalist nor minister, but a confidence trickster of great daring. Zakhar Dvovits, as he called himself, apparently had an exemplary record in the Soviet Union. Born in 1909 in the Ukraine, he qualified in jurisprudence, joined the Communist Party in 1930, becoming a deputy on Moscow city council, and was a secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth Organization.

Moreover, he wrote 200 stories and had two films made from his work. Of all this not a word was true except his date of birth.

Mr Dvovits obtained what were certificates for his services. Once he met a well-placed woman in a Moscow hotel. Charming her by his talk, he obtained a letter requesting a good pension for him.

Eventually he got himself a pension three times the normal rate, a good flat in Moscow, a plot of land in the country, where he had two dachas and on which he was planning to build a third.

He was also offered a dacha in Vladimir, where as a writer he would be free to think and work on his novels. Every year he was given passes to the best sanatoria with well-known medical doctors to take care of him.

His undoing came in Sochi. A tailor in one of the shops he frequented was helpful. Once he met a well-placed woman in a Moscow hotel. Charming her by his talk, he obtained a letter requesting a good pension for him.

He then maintained that the tailor had borrowed more than 5,000 roubles from him, and producing false receipts, went to court to get the money.

In spite of the tailor's denial the court accepted the claim, took the sum from the unfortunate tailor and gave him a year's term in a corrective labour camp for "slander" in opposing a minister.

But the tailor persisted and appealed. The higher court became suspicious, made inquiries and discovered the fraud. Indeed a whole army of investigators was brought in to uncover the story.

They found that Mr Dvovits had worked only five years in his life and that in 1937 he was given five years in a labour camp for illegally reselling goods from a state second-hand shop, making 28,000 roubles profit. After his release, he pretended that he had been a political prisoner, a victim of Stalin's purges.

His story was retold in the current edition of *Literaturny Gazeto*. It is a daring account. The author asks: "Is this the image our people have of ministers and journalists? How could such a character obtain such privileged treatment?"

Actually the picture is all too familiar to Soviet readers. A party background, a good work record and a career in Journalism do bring benefits and privileges available to only a few, and detractors to a handful of such people is expected.

It is not clear whether the man is on trial. *Literaturny Gazeto* is calling for an exemplary sentence, and says that the least Mr Dvovits owes the state 30,000 roubles in a pension illegally obtained.

Whether any action is to be taken against the state officials who happily signed letters entitling him to dachas, pension rights and free holidays is not stated. But the warning to readers is clear.

Victory trips among the occupied villages

From Michael Knappe
Metuliah, March 16

Coach trips into "liberated Lebanon" were staged for the international press today after the Israeli sweep across the border to establish a six-mile deep security belt free of Palestinian Arab bases.

With tanks and armoured personnel carriers causing traffic jams and the occasional dud of artillery fire in the background, Israeli soldiers and children gathered in the streets of Christian communities to wave and make victory signs as we passed by. A bunch of flowers had been attached to one military vehicle parked in a street near a herd of goats and the Israeli soldiers were clearly the heroes of the moment.

The tour, which began from Metuliah, on the Israeli border with Lebanon, was postponed for several hours because of clashes with remnants of Palestinian forces. We were not taken to any of the Palestinian strongholds captured during yesterday's incursions along the 60-mile frontier.

There was no doubting the delight of the Christian communities. "Welcome to liberated Lebanon," said Mr Francois Rizk, an elderly secondary school teacher who acted as our guide. "For 20 months we have lived like rabbits underground because of the Arab fanatics. But now, thanks to the Israeli people, particularly their big army, we are free."

He was speaking four miles from the border at the village of Klea, which is overlooked by the snow-covered slopes of Mount Hermon and to the west by Beaufort Castle, a strong hold built by the Crusaders to defend the Holy Land and now again in use as a Palestinian base. It is just beyond the Israeli security belt, but smoke billowed round it today as a result of Israeli artillery fire.

Later, after a shell from neighbouring Arroun landed near the press party, Israeli aircraft bombed the Palestinian base and plumes of smoke rose from the burning village.

East of Klea another Palestinian stronghold, El Khiam, is now a ghost town. The Israeli forces attacked it at midday yesterday, losing one soldier in the action but driving the Palestinians to take refuge in the hills further north.

At the town of Marjayoun, where there was once a mixed Muslim and Christian community of 11,000, only 3,000 people are left. Today, like yesterday, the suffering together and heavy artillery fire were reassured by the Israeli presence. "For us it is a miracle," said one woman. "Now perhaps our life will return to normal."

Mood in Israel sobered by announcement of 11 dead

From Moshe Brilliant
Tel Aviv, March 16

Satisfaction in Israel over the battering of Palestinian guerrillas in southern Lebanon was dampened this morning by the announcement that 11 Israeli soldiers were killed and 57 injured yesterday in the first day of the action. Arab casualties were estimated here at more than 100.

The Palestinians sustained additional casualties today. General Mordechai Gur, the Chief of Staff, disclosed during a visit to wounded in a Halifa hospital that fighting had continued today in areas not cleared of guerrillas. Palestinian fighters had appeared this morning where "there had been none yesterday."

There were no reports of further Israeli casualties today. All day the radio broadcast the names of yesterday's dead and announced arrangements for their separate funerals near their respective homes.

All the casualties were aged 19 to 21, indicating they were conscripts rendering three years' compulsory service.

Palestinians in Israeli occupied areas were on edge. Buses sent to the West Bank and the Gaza strip this morning for workers employed in Israel returned mostly empty.

In Nabulus, Israeli police used tear gas to disperse Arab high school students who spilled into the street, saying they threatened to disrupt traffic.

To the Old City of Jerusalem, religious Jews complained that they were stoned by young Arabs as they walked to the Wall for prayers. Several were injured and arrests were made. A car was also set ablaze and tyres burnt in a typical form of Arab protest.

Recurrent demonstrations were also reported from Bethlehem, Ramallah, Halhoul, El Bira, Jericho, Jenin and Tulkarm. The Israelis strongly reinforced the tough border police in the occupied areas.

In Jerusalem, Government officials expressed cautious satisfaction that criticism of their action in Lebanon has been mild in friendly European countries and America. No formal protests have been received.

Throughout Israel, approval of the attack in Lebanon was nearly universal, but some said that while it was an answer to terrorism it was not a solution.



Young Lebanese wave an Israeli flag as armoured personnel carriers enter the village of Klea.

Soviet Union condemns invasion Lebanon

From Michael Binyon
Moscow, March 16

The Soviet Union has called for joint action to end Israeli aggression and to bring about the immediate withdrawal of their troops from southern Lebanon.

A statement by the Soviet news agency Tass condemned the invasion of Lebanon and said Israel bore full responsibility for the dangerous consequences of this fresh aggravation of the Middle East situation. It did not, however, say what action, if any, the Russians proposed to take.

Tass said the invasion was in pursuit of Israel's long-standing design—the occupation of southern Lebanon and the defeat of the Palestinian resistance, which Tass called "the staunch fighter for the legitimate national rights of the Palestinians."

Mr Washington Correspondent writes: The United States Administration, playing a leading role today in what is described as "very intensive discussions" here, at the United Nations in New York and in various Middle East capitals to end the war in southern Lebanon.

Death toll of civilians put at 150 by PLO

Continued from page 1

supposed American-Israeli conspiracy. Mr Sadat is the Arab leader most at risk from the Israeli attack and his acute political embarrassment, not to say anger, was perfectly evident this afternoon.

In a statement of condemnation in Cairo, he said that Israel should realize that bloodshed would not create security. "We thought we had reached the point when we were about to solve the whole problem peacefully," he said, "and now Israel is resorting to the use of force again."

Mr Sadat also said, a trifle ambiguously, that Egypt would "make its plans" for the future now that the Israelis had invaded southern Lebanon. He implied a reconsideration of his peace initiative with Israel, although an apparent threat of military action—"If Israel had force, all of us have force"—was couched in the same vague terms.

In truth, Mr Sadat is probably in no position to take any real step towards either peace or war just now. With his aspirations so wounded by the Israeli invasion of southern Lebanon and his policy already condemned as surrender by many Arab states (Iraq repeated this

today), Mr Sadat's political credibility is beginning to look in sorry shape.

The Palestinians, outnumbered by perhaps 10 to one in southern Lebanon, have in the meantime been showing their usual flair for capitalising on total defeat. Their spokesmen in Beirut have been emphasizing that some guerrilla groups are still operating against the Israelis, adding that honourable defeat could only have followed an invasion by an estimated 20,000 Israeli troops.

The PLO is still maintaining that more than 350 Israeli soldiers have been killed or wounded. It also says that 150 civilians have died in the Israeli raids, and that today two Israeli aircraft have been shot down.

Some fighting is certainly still going on. The Israelis admitted today over their state radio, listened to by the Lebanese with little scepticism these days, that the Israeli-held town of Marjayoun was shelled.

Travelling to the front line is a daunting task. When one journalist approached Israeli positions north of Mansoura in southern Lebanon today, he was told by Israeli troops to go away and warned that if he returned he would be "treated as a spy."

Austrian leader's words anger the Israelis

From Sue Masterman
Vienna, March 16

Mr Jakob Doon, the Israeli ambassador in Vienna, has been recalled to Israel, officially to inform his government about a statement made last weekend in Kuwait by Herr Willibald Pahr, the Austrian Foreign Minister.

In Vienna the recall of the ambassador is seen more as a protest by Israel against additional remarks made in the same context by Dr Bruno Kreisky, the Austrian Chancellor.

The official version of what Herr Pahr said in Kuwait, in a comment on the recent terrorist raid into Israel, is: "There can be no doubt that there is a certain relation between this attack and the Israeli refusal to grant the Palestinian people the right to self-determination." Agency reports said Herr Pahr had said that the Palestinian attack was a direct result of Israel's Palestinian policy.

Relations between Dr Kreisky, who is Jewish, and the Israeli Government have been strained since 1974 when, in Israel's opinion, the Austrian Chancellor betrayed them by giving in to the demands of Palestinian terrorists who hijacked a train with Soviet Jewish emigrants just after it crossed the Czech border into Austria.

Mr Doon was using now in order to bring about Israel's independence. This was interpreted by a news agency as Dr Kreisky's "beginning of terrorism." The Austrian ambassador in Israel was summoned to the Foreign Ministry there to explain.

Meanwhile, Herr Pahr, who had arrived back in Austria, stated firmly that his words were not to be misinterpreted. The Israeli Ambassador has been recalled to explain just what has been said.

The Austrian Ambassador in Israel has been asked to check whether Mr Moshe Dayan, the Israeli Foreign Minister, has accused Dr Kreisky of condoning terrorism, as agency reports from Israel claim. If so, the Austrians intend to lodge an official counter-complaint.

Relations between Dr Kreisky, who is Jewish, and the Israeli Government have been strained since 1974 when, in Israel's opinion, the Austrian Chancellor betrayed them by giving in to the demands of Palestinian terrorists who hijacked a train with Soviet Jewish emigrants just after it crossed the Czech border into Austria.

Britain aids Kentucky to combat equine VD

From Our Own Correspondent
New York, March 16

British experts have been rushed to Kentucky this week in an attempt to halt an outbreak of equine venereal disease which threatens America's valuable bloodstock industry. Britain, which suffered a serious outbreak of the disease last year, has the dubious distinction of being regarded as a repository of expertise on the affliction.

Three French stallions are suspected of introducing the disease into this country. They are Carlo Leprieux and Blushin Groom, who was third behind The Minstrel in last year's Derby at Epsom. They were brought here in haste last September on the day before the United States authorities imposed a ban on bloodstock imports from Europe.

The reason for the ban was specifically to prevent the spread to this country of equine venereal disease, the more technical name for which is contagious equine metritis. But the ban may have been bolted shut a crucial few hours too late.

So far only about 20 horses have been affected, and the Government of Kentucky signed an executive order banning the movement of brood mares from one farm to another. Kentucky is the centre of the bloodstock industry, which is important to the state's economy.

Mr Calvin Rainey, secretary of the Jockey Club, commented: "It could be catastrophic. We're hopeful it can be minimized," the breeding season here runs usually from mid-February to mid-June, but it is likely to be extended by a month in the hope that the outbreak will clear up. Such an extension would lessen the economic harm to the ban on horse movement.

The British experts now in Kentucky are Dr David Powell and Dr Donald Simpson, of the Equine Research Station in a Newmarket. They will offer their advice at a panel discussion of racing officials and scientists today. There will be a further meeting in the Department of Agriculture in Washington tomorrow.

Equine venereal disease is similar to the human variety in that it is caused by a virus, transmitted only through sexual intercourse, or occasionally through the use of infected instrumentation. It is rare, causes no danger and temporary sterility.

One of the horses whose sexual activity has been affected is the Triple Crown winner of the 1973 Kentucky Derby, Secretariat. He is now being bred by a Kentucky breeder.

So far this year he has been allowed to mate with only seven mares normally by the time he would be expected a higher scoring rate.

Panama vote test of President's authority

From David Cross
Washington, March 16

President Carter and his closest advisers were today counting the heads of senators whom they expected to support the first of the two controversial Panama Canal treaties in a crucial vote late today.

The outcome is widely seen here as a critical test of the President's prestige and political influence at home and abroad.

The Administration appeared confident that enough members of the Senate had swallowed their doubts about the new arrangements and would approve the first treaty by the required two-thirds majority.

Speaking at a Democratic fund-raising party last night, Mr Walter Mondale, the Vice President, said that thanks to the efforts of Mr Robert Byrd, the Democratic leader in the Senate, "Le and behold we have 67 votes for the Panama Canal treaty." If all 100 senators take part in the vote, a majority of at least 67 is needed.

But officials conceded today that the vote would be extremely close. As the change of heart by just one or two senators could jeopardize the treaties. Moreover, four or five members were still uncommitted this morning.

Today's vote was on the so-called neutrality treaty, which guarantees that the strategic waterway will remain open to the ships of all nations. Control of the canal is handed over to Panama at the end of the century.

To secure more ratification votes in the Senate two additional votes to the original document have been made, spelling out American rights to continue to defend the canal if its neutrality is threatened, and priority to American ships in time of war.

The changes have been made with the approval of the Panamanian Government.

The ratification struggle will continue after today as the Senate prepares to debate the second and arguably more controversial treaty covering arrangements for transferring control to the Panamanians over the next two decades.

Some Senators in favour of the first document today might well be tempted to change their position on the more delicate sovereignty question.

Russians land after longest space flight

Moscow, March 16.—Lieutenant-Colonel Yuri Romanenko and Mr Georgy Grechko landed safely in Soviet Central Asia today after the longest space flight.

Their Soyuz-27 capsule, which descended by parachute, came down on the snow-covered target area in Kazakhstan exactly 36 days and 1 hour after the mission began.

The two cosmonauts this morning said farewell to the Soyuz-6 space station, their orbiting home for more than three months, before detaching the capsule, leaving the two cosmonauts to be picked up by a helicopter. They were immediately given a preliminary medical check which showed they had stood up well to their long mission.

The title, Hero of the Soviet Union, the country's highest honour, and the Order of Lenin were conferred on three of the six cosmonauts who took part in flights to the Soyuz 6 station: Colonel Romanenko, Colonel Vladimir Dzhanibekov, and Captain Vladimir Kenez, the Czechoslovak spaceman.

The other three, Mr Grechko, Mr Oleg Makarov and Colonel Alexei Gubarev, who already held the title, were awarded second Orders of Lenin.

Headed by the colonel Romanenko and Mr Grechko has taken the Soyuz programme several important steps forward in its aim of extending the range and length of manned flights.

Visiting by manned and unmanned Soviet vessels have shown the Soviet Union can supply an orbiting station almost indefinitely.

The extensive programme of cosmonauts called on by the Soviet space chiefs, began research into ways of making space ships more independent of earth, opening up prospects for more distant flights.

The main question is how well cosmonauts can cope with months of weightlessness. Present reports have closely followed the health of Colonel Romanenko and Mr Grechko during their mission.

In preparation for returning to earth, the cosmonauts began daily sessions in special "vacuum suits", designed to improve the flow of blood to the lower part of the body.

The two men have also done regular physical exercises.

Reuters.

Our Geneva Correspondent writes: American spacecraft do not use nuclear reactors, Mr Neil Rosenblatt, the United States ambassador to the United Nations legal subcommittee on the peaceful use of outer space today.

They carried radioisotope power systems designed not to cause any radioactive contamination under normal conditions and only in the most severe accident conditions, he said.

Britain names its new envoy to China

Mr Percy Cradock, who is 54, and at present Ambassador to East Germany, was named yesterday as Britain's next Ambassador to China.

Mr Cradock was in Peking throughout the Cultural Revolution. As chargé d'affaires from August 1968, until his return to London in 1969 he was particularly concerned in attempts to improve British-Chinese relations and to release British subjects held in China, including Mr Anthony Grey, Reuters correspondent.

The Foreign Office also announced yesterday that Mr Peter Moon, who is 49, is to be High Commissioner to Tanzania. He has served in South Africa, New York and Cairo.

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Programme Director Synchrotron Radiation

A dedicated source of synchrotron radiation based on a 2GeV electron storage ring is under construction at Daresbury Laboratory and is scheduled to come into operation about the end of 1979. The design allows for up to twelve beam ports which could provide for up to about fifty experimental stations. A wide ranging scientific programme in physics, chemistry, biology and materials science is envisaged involving universities and other research institutes from all over the United Kingdom and Europe.

Applications are invited for the post of Programme Director of this new facility. The Programme Director will be responsible to the Laboratory Director for the implementation of the scientific programme on the Synchrotron Radiation Source in accordance with the decisions of the Facility Committee which advises the Council's Science Board on the usage of the new Source and gives approval to experiment proposals. The work will cover the organisation and administration of the experimental programme and the provision of equipment and facilities required to support it in collaboration with the user groups. There is an associated programme of theoretical research, and close liaison with the Theory Group is essential.

The existing group of scientific and supporting staff for this activity will be expanded to cover a wider range of science and the experimental programme will also be supported by staff from other divisions of the Laboratory. The appointee will be expected to be an active collaborator in the research being undertaken on the facility. The successful candidate will be a scientist with an established reputation in any area of research relevant to the use of synchrotron radiation, the administrative ability to co-ordinate a complex operation and the personality to secure the effective co-operation of the users and the staff of the Laboratory.

Because of the wide ranging scientific programme and the uncertainty of future trends in research, the appointment is for a limited period of three to five years. The Council would prefer to fill the post by a secondment from, or a joint appointment with, an academic institution but a fixed term appointment is not precluded.

The salary will be within the range of Deputy Chief Scientific Officer (£10,180-£11,180 p.a. + Phase II supplement of £208.80 p.a.). Superannuation cover will be by arrangement with the successful candidate.

Applicants, of either sex, should write no later than 10th April, 1978 giving details of qualifications and experience to:

DARESBURY LABORATORY
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Daresbury, Warrington WA4 4AD

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Applications are invited for the post of Chief Prosecuting Solicitor on the retirement of the present holder. Applicants should be Solicitors with at least ten years' admitted experience, together with a sound knowledge of criminal law and practice, as well as proven experience in advocacy and the conduct of criminal cases.

The Chief Prosecuting Solicitor is a member of the staff of the County Secretary and Solicitor's Department for administrative purposes but is professionally independent in relation to his work of advising the Chief Constable on criminal law and associated civil law matters and undertaking the conduct of such cases.

He/she will be responsible for the Police Prosecutions Office which includes 15 Solicitors, 11 unadmitted legal staff, and clerical and typing support.

Further particulars and application form returnable by 3 April from the County Secretary and Solicitors, County Hall, Maidstone, Ref. 1/OS 1/234/1. Phone (0622) 671111 Ext. 327/328.

Director of Technical Services

The Council of the London Borough of Ealing invites applications for this Principal Officer post which will shortly become vacant on the retirement of Mr. H. O. Peake. Considerable administrative experience at senior level coupled with proven professional ability in relevant disciplines will be basic requirements for the post which involves the coordination and administration of the following divisions each of which is headed by a Chief Officer—Architectural, Engineering, Parks and Amusements, Quantity Surveying, Town Planning and Works. The post carries with it membership of the Management Board of Officers and through this an obligation to contribute to the management of all sectors of the Council's business.

Salary scale is currently £11,533 rising to £12,918 p.a.

Further particulars of the post and of the Administration of the Borough may be obtained from Town Clerk and Chief Executive Officer, Town Hall, Ealing, W5 to whom applications should be sent by 6th April, together with the names and addresses of two referees.

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The salary will be within Grade IV for University Administrative Officers and have a range of £8,102-£9,530 (under review) plus £450 London Allowance per annum together with superannuation under the University Superannuation Scheme.

Further particulars of the post may be obtained from the Dean, The London Hospital Medical College, Turner Street, London, E1 1AD, to whom applications (in duplicate), giving the names and addresses of three referees, should be sent by 17th April, 1978.

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PARLIAMENT, March 16, 1978

Mr Silkin will not budge on minimum demands for fishing

House of Commons

Mr John Silkin, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said there was no movement on his side on the minimum demands for a fishing regime but there were signs the other eight EEC countries were moving.

Mr Silkin had told Mr David Mudd (Plymouth and Cambourne, C) that no meetings of the Council of Fisheries Ministers of the EEC were scheduled.

Mr Mudd—When he meets his European colleagues, I hope he will impress upon them, when they discuss conservation measures, the early warning fears expressed by Cornish fishermen of the classic signs of the early fishings of the Cornish mackerel.

He should discuss the possibility of establishing a six-mile zone where no vessel of more than 80 feet shall fish.

Mr Silkin (Lewisham, Deptford, Lab)—Mackerel fishing means watching and I was glad that our industry started to move in a self-defending organisation. We are in this instance fortunate in having no historic rights within the 12-mile zone. But all of thought and care is needed. This is one of the great potential fishery stocks of our country.

Mr Robert Hicks (Bodmin, C)—When Mr Silkin takes the additional conservation measures for South-west mackerel, will he take account of the needs of the smaller inshore fishermen in such counties?

Mr Silkin—This is an important factor. There have been consultations between my officials and the fishing interests concerned with mackerel, particularly the small inshore fishermen.

We hope to get an all-industry view. This has presented some difficulties, but we may be able to get some kind of *modus vivendi*. I think this will be achieved relatively soon.

Mr Robert Hughes (Aberdeen, North, Lab)—What are Mr Silkin's immediate requirements for concluding a satisfactory fishing regime? Does he know how far, if at all, our European partners are prepared to move towards meeting these?

Mr Silkin—It might, in the absence of scheduled fisheries councils, be appropriate to restate these immediate demands.

One is for an exclusive zone between 12 and 12 miles.

Mr James Callaghan, the Prime Minister, said during question time that it was his ambition to see if a plan for the world economy could be constructed in time for the July summit in Bonn.

Mr Giles Radice (Chester-le-Street, Lab) had said a wide-ranging package was needed to tackle the world's economic problems of inflation, growth, international trade, international monetary stability and international liquidity.

Mr Callaghan (Cardiff, South-East, Lab)—For some time, like 18 months now I have been endeavouring to get other world leaders to see the necessity for common action in this sphere and believe there are now signs of a desire to take common action.

It is my ambition if possible to plan which would be in the approach of all countries in time for the July summit which is to be held in Bonn.

What is needed at present in the world is not one set of measures Mr Radice talks about but the feeling that the world's economies are taking a grip so confidence can grow, especially in the United States and some countries on the continent.

Mr Margaret Thatcher, Leader of the Opposition (Barnet, Finchley, C)—Why do you talk about the world economy? Most of our competitors have done far better than we have on growth, productivity and unemployment and have far lower taxes than we have.

It would be better for Mr Callaghan to remedy the faults in his own

economic policy for this country than look overseas for salvation.

Mr Callaghan—I try to do both. I have never failed to point out the need for higher productivity in this country and for greater efficiency and expansion in international trade.

Mr Thatcher should not try to extract the mote from my eye before she has removed the beam from her own. There is a substantial international dimension to the problem of world trade and to world prosperity. I hope one day she will recognise it.

During our exchanges on the measures to relieve unemployment announced yesterday, Mr James Prior, chief Opposition spokesman said it was an extraordinary state of affairs when Mr Callaghan could be congratulated by his own backbenchers on achieving unemployment of 1,400,000 with another 400,000 people having to be subsidised in jobs, a total of 1,900,000 unemployed under a Government that talked about 'back to work with Labour'.

Mr Callaghan—I do not think it is a matter for congratulation at all. I do think that those who cheer such a record are every bit as much the level of unemployment would be if subsidies were abolished, if grants were done away with.

If the policies of the Conservative Party are every bit as good as public expenditure even more, we would be talking about three million unemployed.

Mr Silkin—My impression from discussions with my opposite numbers from New Zealand is that they still look upon themselves as a country which is willing and able to supply the United Kingdom with the traditional commodities, always exported to us at a price that the British consumer can afford.

Mr Silkin—While appreciating the efforts he has made, does he feel these efforts will be blocked by the EEC? I consider it of primary importance that New Zealand should be able to continue to export butter and lamb to this country.

I have made, and shall continue to make, our position clear to Community discussions, and shall keep in close touch with the New Zealand Government.

Mr Jay—As the Treaty of Rome is so keen on competition, it would be competition for artificially dear continental food if we imported foodstuffs from New Zealand free of quotas, levies or other restrictions.

Mr Silkin—Part of the programme we have is to liberalise the importation into the EEC of foodstuffs, particularly from Commonwealth countries, but from third countries in general. This is not something that is going to be achieved overnight. It is a long process.

Mr Emyr Jones (Gwent, Montgomery, Lab)—The estimate of cost of transporting and handling one single carcass of lamb is £8.75 and this is one of the reasons why New Zealand trade, if it were to increase in the price of lamb in this country it is helps their farmers.

Mr Arthur Lewis (Newham, North-West, Lab) asked the Home Secretary whether as the leaders of the one million Muslims in Great Britain were demanding changes in the law to enable Muslim men to practise their beliefs and actions on the question of divorce and the inheritance rights and on other matters, he would publish his letter to Dr Syed Fasha, General Secretary of the Union of Muslim

Another is for a dominant presence between 12 and 20 miles. This is a dominant presence because there must be effort limitation, also because quotas are not enough by themselves. They would be dominant in that the United Kingdom would get a dominant share of the growth.

A third demand is for a more than adequate scientific basis of conservation which has not yet been put forward by the Commission or anyone but ourselves.

On how far other countries would be prepared to move—I get the impression that there are more moves by the other eight. On the minimum requirements, there is a movement on my side.

Mr David Penhallow (Trent, L)—I cannot see the West country fisherman who believes the measures taken so far are sufficient to preserve the Cornish mackerel stock long term.

Mr Silkin—This cut in mackerel fishing—the self-denying ordinance—was started by the industry. I hope and believe they will have kept it and that there will have been some result.

In later fishing exchanges, Mr John Peyton, chief Opposition spokesman on agriculture and fisheries (Yeovil, C) said—Does he think the time has come actually to do something? It would be a helpful way of propelling discussions forward by actually announcing some positive conservation measures which he will take, and by giving a clear date as to when he is going to introduce them.

Mr Silkin—Mr Peyton probably was not listening in February when I introduced national measures, now in existence.

Discussions are going on with the Commission. If we have to make unilateral conservation measures in our own waters—all right, but it is a matter we must consider. Clearly, it is better if we get member states to cooperate and get an agreed solution.

Mr Peyton—He should now say when he thinks would be ready to introduce specific conservation measures.

Mr Silkin—I will bring about other measures at the due moment, but I still think it is worth while spending a little more on conservation measures that can be imposed throughout the waters of all the EEC member states. The EEC member states' proposals were totally unacceptable because they were totally negative.

Mr Peter Temple-Morris (Leicester, C)—The breeding herd, particularly gilts, which is a bad omen for the future of the pig industry, is being reduced. The pig farmer, of all farmers, has had a difficult time.

When the Danes are publicly saying they want a larger share of the British market and saying that with the financial advantages we know they have, and bearing in mind that this affects the whole of the pig industry, what is the pig producer to do? What is the pig farmer to do?

Mr Bishop—The fall in the breeding herd has been slightly less than was predicted. It is every bit as much the temporary subsidy of £17m that we brought in—until we were required to change the policy—the situation would have been much worse.

We have been pressing consistently for the Community to look for a revivification of the MCAs. Mr John Newton, chief Opposition spokesman on agriculture (Yeovil, C)—Will he urge Mr Silkin to give a bit stronger support to the British pig farmer?

Mr Silkin—This is crucial. How does he face the prospect that by the end of this year the Danes will have taken over some 48 per cent of our market?

Mr Bishop—Mr Peyton has it the wrong way round. Mr Silkin has been pressing consistently for over a year to get the kind of result for the MCAs which is now being given support by the French.

Mr Peyton—Will he answer the question about the Danish share of the market? Is it every bit as much the level of unemployment would be if subsidies were abolished, if grants were done away with.

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Mr Silkin—My impression from discussions with my opposite numbers from New Zealand is that they still look upon themselves as a country which is willing and able to supply the United Kingdom with the traditional commodities, always exported to us at a price that the British consumer can afford.

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Civil liability and compensation proposals could be costly

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ing and have important implications. Their implementation would affect consumers, manufacturers, employers, employees, trade unions, motorists, insurers and handicapped persons.

The Government will therefore study the recommendations with care and urgency and consult interested organisations as appropriate.

In reaching their decisions, the Government will have regard to the public expenditure cost of implementing the proposals which could be considerable.

As the House will recall, the Government's commitment to introduce a scheme of payments for severe damage caused by vaccination decisions in the form of the Royal Commission's report.

As soon as the relevant recommendations have been considered—and this will be done as a matter of urgency—the Secretary of State for Social Services (Mr Callaghan) will make a further statement.

Mr Margaret Thatcher, Leader of the Opposition (Barnet, Finchley, C)—Do the recommendations on injuries caused by defective products—I imagine some of them are meant to go to the home of the manufacturer.

Does the report include details of the benefit implications both of the proposed scheme and of the cost of the self-employed would have to face if they were to provide cover?

What are the financial implications calculated in the report?

Mr Callaghan—There is a total placed on the cost. That is £130m. I think it is a reasonable estimate of how it has been calculated. That would be part of the public spending.

regards the unborn child there is a substantial statement on that in the Royal Commission but I prefer not to go into it because I do not want to mislead the House

and I want to be sure of the recommendations.

Mr Leopold Abse (Pontypool, Lab)—The suggestion that social security payments should be taken into full account when damages are awarded will be of concern to trade unions, particularly when damages received in British courts are so much lower for injured workers than in most other sophisticated countries. I hope the Government will consider that.

While there may be many attractions to a no-fault scheme, would Mr Callaghan not acknowledge that it is a scheme, which apart from causing increases in the price of petrol, could be a serious burden on the exchequer?

Mr Callaghan—I realise this would be a matter of great concern. The question of motor car injuries is an issue which has to be considered. Mr Abse will read it with care.

This illustrates the need for the Government to be careful in furthering the proposals. If one represents from any group who wish to put them to us.

At the same time some of those recommendations rest on a valuable basis. I do not want to see them delayed indefinitely. I therefore ask ministers concerned to go ahead with consultations as quickly as they can.

Mr Emyr Jones (Gwent, Montgomery, Lab)—The report is welcome, indicating as it does the need not to establish blame to gain compensation. But it took five years to prepare the report and I hope it will be given an undertaking that the Government could say what their priorities are for the many recommendations? Some of them concern very important safety.

Mr Callaghan—I give that undertaking sympathetically because

the report does into many new fields which concern many people.

Though three months is not long for a Government to consider these matters I would nevertheless wish ministers to have a proper opportunity for consultation. I would certainly like to consider whether we cannot have a preliminary debate before the summer recess.

Mr Jack Ashley (Stoke-on-Trent, South, Lab)—Would he ensure that the proposals for helping disabled children will not only be adequate but generous?

While I welcome the proposals for strict liability for drugs damage, it would be outrageous to consider that we should lose the consideration we should have for children go through the courts to define, not prove, that strict liability.

Would Mr Callaghan set up an independent court to consider this question of strict liability in addition to the proposals for compensation for children already damaged by vaccine?

Mr Callaghan—The Government are giving urgent consideration to this plan. But it is right for us to wait. We are having parallel consideration of the general recommendations which have been made by the Royal Commission in respect of the great body of children.

Mr Nicholas Fairbairn (Kilross and West Perthshire, C)—If one opens the doors to the no-fault liability concept there are grave dangers that those who have disabilities, such as one eye or one arm, could be liable to compensation in equity.

Mr Callaghan—I take note of that. Mr Fairbairn—Burdett (Gillingham, C)—Will he give an undertaking that the recommendations regarding handicapped children will receive his special consideration and that of ministers?

Mr Callaghan—I give that undertaking. At present, apart from

per cent by tighter administration, central Government should be doing.

Savings could also be made by abandoning some socialist policies which have already been put on the Community Land Act.

For some purposes, public spending was increased and which has increased public spending reduced available jobs, lowered living standards and stimulated inflation.

The White Paper offered no prospect of decreasing public spending and if it continued at the rate forecast in the White Paper there would be a prospect of a tax cut or a revival of the economy.

Mr Michael English (Nottingham, West, Lab) said the Nottingham much bigger than anything the Chancellor or chief Secretary intended to put in expenditure cuts. That made all this a myth and the debate was about a fiction.

Capital expenditure cuts were deeper than current expenditure cuts. The bulk of current expenditure was on jobs in the Civil Service, local government and the armed forces. The cuts in civil servants' pay were not a cut in the pay of the armed forces, but a cut in the pay of the armed forces.

Mr Enoch Powell (South Down, U) said all this agony of cuts in public expenditure derived from the folly of the notion that it was possible to set out a five-year programme for public expenditure matched as it ought to be with a five-year reliable indication of the resources that would be coming forward to match the programme. So far from producing certainty, this method had produced chaos. So far from producing confidence in the management of expenditure, it had produced a state of confusion. It was not subjected to the disruption of sudden cuts, it had caused precisely that.

The projection of spending programmes in the light of unknown and unknowable but necessarily over-estimated availability of resources not only did nothing to maintain employment but was a positive hindrance to the maintenance of employment. Some time they had to give up this nonsense and so back to the proper budgeting which waste function of government which could only be done in the circumstances of each year as it emerged.

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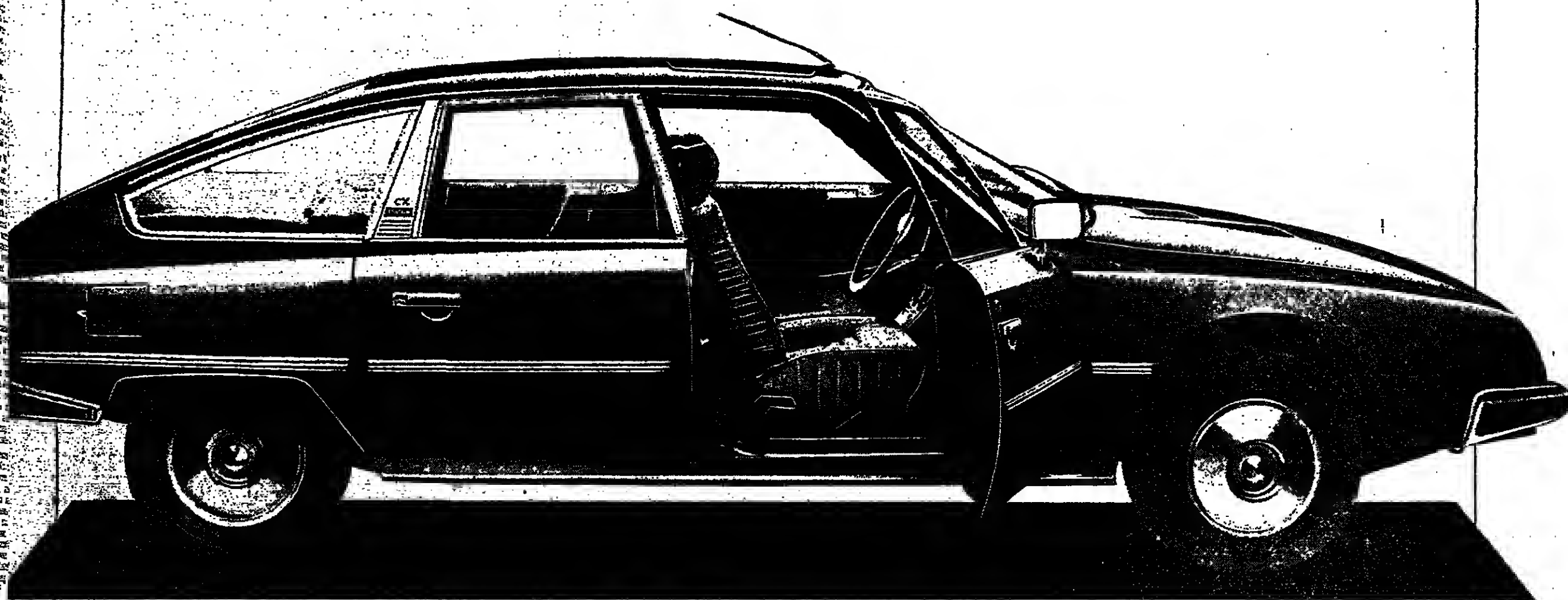
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CX 2400 GTi (5 speed, Injection)	118mph	£6580.08
CX 2400 Safari Estate	109mph	£5575.05
CX 2400 Familiale	109mph	£5678.01
CX Prestige Injection (C-matic)	112mph	£8640.45

CITROËN CX. A WORLD OF COMFORT.

Bernard Levin

When one man's meat is the same man's poison

The 1978 edition of the *Good Food Guide* is the worst yet; Mr Christopher Driver's apparent determination to turn it into the *Take-Away Kebob House* and *Rather Nasty Trotatoria Guide* is a stage nearer fulfilment.

Tastes differ: there is almost no restaurant in this country which is really consistent in its performance, and no doubt some diners have had horrid experiences where I have had only good ones, and vice versa. Nor, of course, is the possession of a great name and history any guarantee of present excellence. But I find it impossible to take seriously a guide to good eating which, in its London section, omits all of these: the White Tower, A.J. & E.C. de France, the Mirabelle, La Napoule, the Savori Grill, Carriers, Fu Tong, the Gavioli, the Trattoria, the Cafe Royal, Tiberio, the Mumma, the Dorchester Terrace, F. & L. Poulbot, Claridge's, the Sheraton, Walton's, Genoa's and Deo Luigi. Is it seriously to be supposed that none of these is fit to be included in a book which gives its seal of approval to a restaurant of which the entry says "point very carefully to the menu when ordering, do not expect everyone to get their food simultaneously, and perhaps sit at the counter to forestall oversights"? Or the one of which the book mentions "packaged ham in the real Gordon Bleu" and "places cold, malleable greasy"? Or "shabby, wretchedly laid out menus"?

complex sauces are best avoided? Or "... moussaka has been 'heavily' stuffed with leaves 'best without the sauce' and pheasant 'dry'? Or 'soft and watery vegetables, 'stew-like' bouillabaisse, 'ice-hard' sorbet? Or 'soft drinks only'? Or 'chips were the only type of potato to be bad'? Or 'many dishes could do with blotting to remove superfluous oil'? Or 'puddings might well be worse'? Or 'tea dark brown and tannic'? Or 'refined fish and chip shop'? Or 'some of the wines listed may be out of stock or not worth listing'? Or 'there was more booze than fish in the mackerel curry'? Or 'fully licensed but with only one joint, 81 out of 10'? Or 'find a lot elsewhere'? Or 'poor cooking or recipes, and carelessly kept surroundings'? Or 'tasteless and pointless and peas'? Is the Mirabelle really unfit to share a page with these?

The obvious conclusion is that Mr Driver, when it comes to food and wine, doesn't know what he is talking about. The obvious conclusion, however, would be quite wildly wrong; Mr Driver knows a very great deal about serious eating and drinking, and over a remarkably wide variety of cuisines. The trouble lies not in his palate, but in all of his things, his conscience, not to mention the consciences of his wife and children.

In a *Sunday Times* profile of



Christopher Driver

thinks about it a lot. But he comes to the conclusion it's a fruitless contradiction. "It's a fruitless contradiction. Having this undercurrent of Christos radicalism means I'm less likely to go along with the ch-chi, expensive account big-spending type of restaurant. It's obvious that there are a vast number of people in the world who haven't got enough to eat, and there's also a tiny number who are, right, incensed about what they have got."

Such statements make the Drivers admirable citizens, and Mr Driver's own record—Friends' Ambulance Unit, board member of Christian Aid, official historian of UNICEF—is all along with the ch-chi, expensive account big-spending type of restaurant. It's obvious that there are a vast number of people in the world who haven't got enough to eat, and there's also a tiny number who are, right, incensed about what they have got.

the door of his home reading "This is a No Smoking house—Put it out." I am reminded that Savonarola was finally burnt at the stake, and a thundering good thing too. The question, however, is not man—if that were the question the answer would clearly be yes—but whether he really should be editing the *Good Food Guide*. And it is not only the bizarre exclusions and even more bizarre inclusions that make me raise the question.

For there is also Mr Driver's attitude, as silly as it is nasty, that if you are rich you cannot possibly know or care about what you are eating and drinking. The typical patron of the Gavioli, for instance, is, according to Mr Driver, a "rich vulgarian" (the two words seem inseparable in his mind), and his hatred of this restaurant, which runs through its entry every year, seems to be the product of the irreconcilable conflict in his mind: the Gavioli is very expensive, and it is very good, and because it is so good, it is bad and too Puritanical not to be furious at its prices, the result is an annual snarl of outrage.

And that, I suspect, is what is at the bottom of the man's foolish omissions. Mr Driver would certainly never leave out a restaurant to punish it for being expensive; but with his beliefs it is inevitable that, however objective he is when weighing up favourable and

adverse reports, he is subconsciously predisposed against such places. (He is also both foolish and unpleasant about his book's chief rival, the *Egon Ronay Guide*; Mr Ronay's Preface to his own 1978 edition contains two wholly gratuitous insults—a reference to those who "cannot tell Ronay from butter" and another to food guides which "seek sponsors in some flush branch of the motor industry". The *Ronay Guide*, though it, too, is not wholly reliable, is now clearly the better buy of the two, possibly because Mr Ronay spends less time worrying about starving Asians and more time getting on with his own job. Mr Driver's chances of Heaven are no doubt greater than Mr Ronay's, but most people buy food guides for gastronomic rather than theological purposes.)

The *Good Food Guide*, over the years, has done immeasurable good in improving the standards of British eating and drinking. But Raymond Postgate, its founder, who was at least as good a socialist as his successor, never made his successor's mistake of believing that enjoying the good things of life is sinful. Mr Driver seems to find it increasingly difficult to reconcile his work as editor with his beliefs as a Goodish Christian. That, in my view, does him great credit. But it also seems to me to suggest that it is time he considered relinquishing the post.

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Italy's new breed of bodysnatchers

The kidnapping of Aldo Moro, leader of the Christian Democratic Party, on his way to work yesterday morning in Rome has undoubtedly appalled the Italian public. But it may startle the rest of Europe even more in that Italy is fast becoming known to the world as a land of kidnappers. Hardly a day now passes without reports of political shootings or kidnappings. Over 2,000 separate incidents of political terrorism were recorded last year since 1970 some 300 people have been kidnapped. But the real figure is certainly higher.

The Moro kidnapping, coming as it does at a moment of political tension, could lead to grave enormous implications. Because of this, and because of the way in which it was carried out it is enormously embarrassing to the Italian government. But the Italian setting is important, and the way in which kidnapping has developed there in the last 12 years.

The finger of blame for yesterday's kidnapping would point to the Red Brigades, even had they not already claimed responsibility. Forty of their members have been sentenced to life in prison for more than two years for acts of terrorism, a trial constantly postponed as fresh attacks have effectively scared away potential jurors. The kidnapping of Moro may be a final bid to free the accused.

It would not be the first Red Brigade kidnapping. Up until the spring of 1972 this group of young, mostly middle-class students who, broadly, believe that Italy's economic crisis presents an opportunity for a revolutionary seizure of power, confined their attacks to property, not people. They planted bombs, set fire to factories. On March 3, 1972, they turned to people: the first man they took was the director of the St-Emiliano factory in Milan, Indro Montanelli. The kidnapping of Moro may be a final bid to free the accused.

can in the late sixties to search of work and who brought with them a new crime much in vogue in their wild and impetuous mountain gangs. Kidnapping. The kidnappers have their particular hallmark. Their victims are treated much like sheep, kept on the move up and down the mountains, and subjected at times to extreme brutality.

There are the Sicilians and Calabrians, the "Mafiosi" who in the early seventies felt that they were losing hold on their money on their island; building contracts were temporarily suspended by the economic situation, the traffic in drugs and money was shifting to other parts of the country. The Mafia needed cash. So they moved north, either voluntarily or in what turned out to be one of the most ill-judged of all final measures—the "soggiorno obbligato" in which suspected criminals were sent away from the scene of their activities. It was, as one Milanese magistrate said to me recently: "Like sending a mouse away from a piece of cheese and into a granary."

In the industrial north the Mafia soon moved into the most profitable new means of extortion and kidnapping. Their stamp is efficient, organized, a will to power to which almost indefinitely, and a certain humanity towards the hostages. The Mafia did seem to have been killed in error—overdrugged, or because they saw too much.

Finally there are the criminal gangs, groups who once off by themselves have now jumped onto the profitable new bandwagon. Just how profitable it is was illustrated to me by one policeman in Milan, Romano, he said, have amounted to about 557m in five years. I wish I could make 80 years to make on that by robbing banks.

Moro is exceptional in that his kidnappers are almost exclusively industrialists—builders, jewellers, car manufacturers. There is hardly a rich Italian family that has not been hit. Businessmen fear promotion just as they have long since abandoned their fast cars and milk cans.

Not surprisingly, the protection business booms. Some 1,000 people are thought to be guarding the "gringos" or "guardians angels". Very few of them are officially protected by the police—and, as the Murri and Scherer cases show, even a few of little use when the big names are determined enough to Karate and judo classes are completely booked out; special bullet-proof cars are on a waiting list; 36,000 guard dogs were sold in 1975 alone.

None of this, not the protection, nor the kidnapping, nor the blocking of assets (the rich merely borrow from their friends), seems to have the slightest effect. Kidnapping is growing. And it will go on doing so, say magistrates, until there is a fundamental change in the nature of Italian society itself: a new, highly trained, coordinated police structure is crucial; (at the moment there are forces work separately) and some minimum co-operation from banks (the ransom money that does not go straight into sheep, land or building flow virtually unchecked over the borders). But it is not until the life of the victim is made secondary to stopping the kidnappers that the crime itself can hope to be checked.

Charles Hargrove

Caroline Moorehead

The big names who are France's 'gang of four'

Most people in France remember the television impact made in 1969 by M Jacques Duclos, the communist candidate to the presidency, and the historic debate in 1974 between M Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and M François Mitterrand, who probably tipped the scales in the President's favour.

The present election campaign has been no exception. The stage—or rather the screen—has been monopolized by what the French call the "sacred moments" of politics, the leaders of the big parties. Even marginal parties without the least hope of winning a seat have put up the required number of candidates merely to be given a chance to make their existence known to the public through television. And the televisual qualities of this or that political leader count far more with the average voter than policies and programmes.

As it is, the leaders of the "gang of four", Messrs Barre, Chirac, Marchais and Mitterrand, rather disparagingly calls it, has dominated both the political scene and the campaign. M Giscard d'Estaing, as President of the Republic, is in a class apart.

Undoubtedly, the revelation of the current election campaign has been M GEORGES MARCHAIS, the Secretary General of the Communist Party. He has succeeded in fascinating even voters who could not be more remote from Marxism and all its works by his force of personality, and his historic (in the etymological sense) gift.

This is no small achievement. Only a few months ago, he was adversely compared by the man in the street to his apparently more benign predecessor, M Waldeck-Rochet: with his glaring eyes, and dark bushy eyebrows, his stub nose, his square

combaric jaw, and his almost permanent scowl, he was almost the caricature of "the man with the knife between his teeth", as the communist bogey used to be described.

But he learnt how to get rid of his aggressiveness, to make his formidable gifts as a debater in a sort of bawling bonhomie.

M Georges Marchais was born in 1920, in Normandy, the son of a worker, who was also a bit of an anarchist, his son has been a communist since he was a child, and he was brought up by his mother, a practising Roman Catholic. He did well at school and thought at one time of becoming a teacher. But he was drawn towards aircraft construction.

He became a qualified mechanic, and just before the war joined an aircraft construction firm near Paris. One of the episodes in his life which remains in the shade is how he came to work in the Messier-Sitrin design office in Paris in 1942. He has always maintained that he was drafted compulsorily by the Germans.

The next few years of his life are rather obscure. He claims he got leave to go to France, went underground and joined the resistance movement. He entered the Communist Party at the age of 27 in 1947. Two years later, he was a part-time member of the party branch for the Seine. Then he became full-time secretary of the Metal Workers' Union of Issy, near Paris. The same year he joined the central committee. In 1959, only 12 years after joining its ranks, he was a deputy member of the political bureau, the supreme organ of the party.

He was until then almost exclusively an "apparatchik", who had little contact with the world outside the party, and none with political circles; and had the reputation of being an orthodox hard liner. In 1970

he rose to the heights of deputy. During the next three years and even more so after 1973, when he became titular secretary-general, he was to preside over the most far-reaching transformation of French communism, which brought about the split of the French left.

He was certainly the driving force behind the policy which led to the union of the left with the socialists in 1972. He also imposed on his party a logical, about-face in the abandonment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

M Georges Marchais has repeatedly shown his tactical ability to change the party line when his highest interests were at stake. Last September, his tough stand on nationalization brought about a split with the socialists which seemed definitive, and an unrelenting barrage of accusations and innuendo was poured out against M Mitterrand and his erstwhile allies in subsequent months. But a few days ago, he did another about-face, and with surprising ease agreed to a spectacular reconciliation with them and the left-wing radicals. He can claim that his tactics have succeeded in checking the socialist advance.

By comparison with Georges Marchais M FRANÇOIS MITTERRAND is a rather effusive personality. Yet he has been around in politics longer than any of the leading personalities, and even the lesser stars. He had a conventional religious education, studied law in Paris, was called up for military service, captured after the collapse of France, joined the resistance movement and founded a network of his own while appearing to serve the Vichy regime.

It was the start of a long life of calumnies and innuendo with which he has had to contend throughout his political life. But at the liberation of France, he became a deputy for

the Nièvre, a seat he has held for more than 30 years and was made a junior minister by General de Gaulle at the age of 27. He was in bold office 11 times in seven years under the Fourth Republic, as one of the founders of the UDSR, left-wing social democratic splinter group in the Assembly.

He refused to endorse the constitution of the Fifth Republic, and rose to public notoriety when he stood as a candidate for the presidency of the UDSR, losing to General de Gaulle in 1953.

The Gaullist landslide in the elections of 1958 reduced his popularity almost to nil. But he resumed the long political-making ascent which was to lead to the reorganization of the Socialist Party in 1971.

The rapid growth of the Socialist Party, the welding and building together of its traditional social democratic and new Marxist elements required a firm hand. M Mitterrand has been accused both within his party and in the left of dictatorial behaviour. But without him, the new Socialist Party would probably have fallen.

Nothing could be in greater contrast with the make-up of the personality of M JACQUES CHIRAC, who during the election speech-making campaign which in three months has carried him through more than 500 public meetings, and has consolidated his public image of action man.

He became Prime Minister in May, 1974, aged 41, one of the youngest this country has known, the climax—but it is only for him a foothill leading to the summit of the Presidency of the Republic—of a meteoric political career.

His attachment to M Pompidou's personal staff determined his future career. It also explains why he has retained a very moving, almost flinty wor-

ship for the memory of France's much misjudged second president. He was sent out into the wilds of central France, in 1967, as one of a band of "young wolves" to conquer this bastion of the left for the Gaullist Party, and succeeded. He was made a junior minister the same year, and a senior one four years later.

He played a key part in the election and consolidation of what has often been described as the "Gaullist Republic", first with the election of President Giscard d'Estaing, by swinging the Gaullist Party to his side away from M Chaban-Delmas, the former Premier; and then with the reorganization of his own party and divided party.

But in the meantime, M Chirac had abruptly parted company with President Giscard d'Estaing, with whose policies, mainly in the defence field and taxation, he did not agree, but largely because of a clash of personalities.

The consolidation of the Gaullist Party under his command, success in his keeping together in the fold both its conservative middle class elements, and of its popular fringe and in upholding its position as the largest party of the government majority are impressive.

He has responded skilfully to the yearning of a large number of his countrymen for law and order. Under his influence, Gaullism has become even more Bonapartist in character than it was before, combining the state authority, national independence with popular approval and progress.

Jacques Chirac is often accused by his enemies of being a "fascist". The charge is unjustified. In private, he is an extremely likeable, friendly, straightforward man. In public, he can appear blunt, arrogant, and excessively sure of himself.

What is certain is that he has no time for soul-searching, doubts, or hesitations.

M RAYMOND BARRE is a very different type of individual. He is almost unknown in political circles when he became Prime Minister, in succession to M Chirac, in August, 1974, though he has held office for eight months as Minister for Foreign Trade, and carried out several confidential missions for the government before that.

He was born in 1924 and became a professor of economics in 1950. He has taught ever since, until he was called to the premiership.

It is important in assessing the personality and politics of M Barre to remember his deep admiration for General de Gaulle, and his attachment to the constitution of the Fifth Republic, though he has never joined the Gaullist Party.

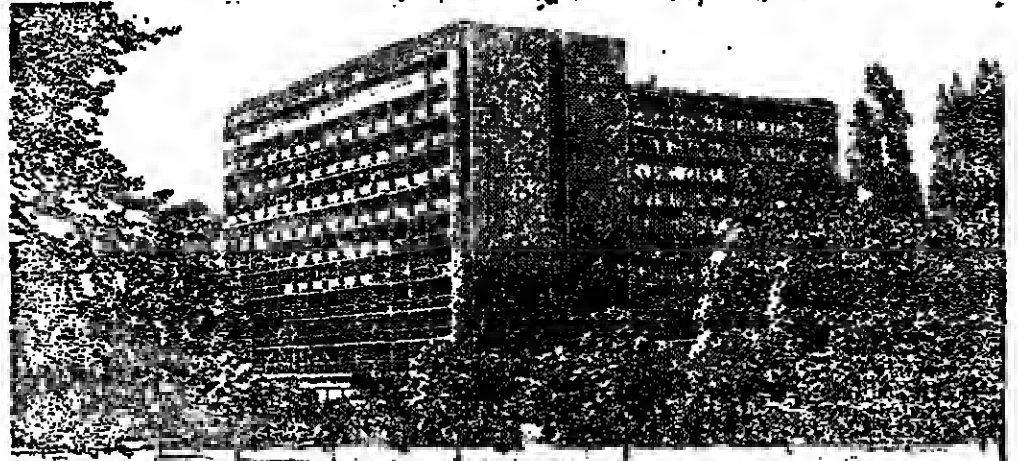
He has never courted popularity, or shied from telling his fellow countrymen the truth, however unpleasant. And he insisted for months that he was not a politician.

At first his fellow countrymen were rather disconcerted by this Prime Minister who refused to act like a politician. The drawing rooms and lobbies scoffed. But the "de Gaulle" of the grass roots, and the provinces, were comforted and reassured. His triumphal election at Lyons, where he stood for parliament last week, is a demonstration of his growing popularity.

Like all successful Prime Ministers of the Fifth Republic, M Barre has a strong sense of the idea that he could make a bid for the Elysée Palace. But those circumstances would obviously be different from those in which M Chirac would have his chance.

Charles Hargrove

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The Indian judge is named as Miss Black

A BBC radio programme, *Inquest on a Novel*, to be broadcast next Saturday, casts doubt on claims to authenticity made for a minor classic first published in 1931, reprinted 14 times, and twice broadcast by the BBC.

The book is *Letters of an Indian Judge to an English Gentlewoman*, which does not carry an author's credit because, says a publisher's note "they were not written with a view to publication". The woman in question is Miss Black, an English colonel, living in India during the last days of the Raj.

A paperback edition is to be published later this month, and it carries a publisher's preface saying that they have satisfied themselves that the letters in the book are genuine.

The BBC Radio 4 programme will say that its investigations have revealed that the identity of the author has now been established. It is named as Dorothy Doolittle Black, writer of 82 light novels, who died last year at the age of 73.

The BBC's findings are challenged in the programme by Rosemary De Courcy, editor at Furze Publications Ltd, who are bringing out the paperback. She says she has compared the book with others known to have been written by Miss Black and she finds it impossible to believe they were all written by the same person.

In the *Author's and Writer's Who's Who*, Miss Black is listed as the author of *Letters of an Indian Judge to an English Gentlewoman*.

The out-casts

Somebody at the Penthouse Club, the adults-only leisure centre in Whitehorse Street, does know his/her Dickens. Otherwise he/she would not have sent honorary membership cards to all the principals in the cast of Oliver Twist, the last of the four films, aged 11 to 13, who alternate in the roles of Oliver and the Artful Dodger.

The club sent the tickets after receiving copies of the programme for Oliver! "I suppose we just didn't realize that Oliver and the Dodger were aged under 21," said an embarrassed young lady.

When he received his card, one of the two Dodgers, Colin Morgan, went to the company manager, inquired what the Penthouse Club was and asked could he go. The harsh facts of life were duly explained to him.

In the know, but not officially

Diplomats have always been contemptuous of journalists, and not only because of old-world elitist attitudes. They also appear to believe that only the foreign correspondents, with official files can possibly know what really happens.

Not so in Rhodesia, although it is probably the most important item on Dr Owen's agenda. Apart from occasional diplomatic initiatives, the only official British representative in Salisbury is a very junior Foreign and Commonwealth Office clerk.

He lives in the faded splendour of the old governor's residence, but has no contact, official or non-official, with the Smith government. His only sources of information are the local press and radio and visiting foreign correspondents.

Presumably, Dr Owen thought he was well served, but his colleagues in southern Africa have learnt that unnamed British and American officials will meet representatives of the Smith government in South Africa today. They feel they have enough to do keeping their paying readers informed without doing the donkey work for the FCO.

I recently wrote about the difficulty of booking holiday cottages in France, where the Government tourist office has had to close its doors to the lengthily waiting list. I now find that such difficulties are not unknown in Britain either.

Having just received the *AA Guide to Holiday Homes Cottages and Crofts* (£1.55), I phoned round to see what was still available so comparatively late in the booking season. The answer would seem to be: next to nothing.

I made eight calls before finding any vacancy at all between May and October. None of the

Small wonder

A small sensation seems a good way to describe the interest aroused when a waistcoat once worn by "General" Tom Thumb, the 19th century show business phenomenon, came up for auction at Phillips's on March 2. It was bought for £130 by the collector, Mr. There will, I predict, be a bigger sensation on April 7 when an entire suit belonging to the little fellow is to go under the hammer, at a Bonhams collectors sale. The trousers in my photograph measure exactly 13 inches.

I have unearthed the fact that the trousers were left for auction at a shop in Paris about the middle of the last century, when the midget visited Britain.

They were not, however, worn by the fully-grown Tom Thumb. He is thought to have inhabited them when he was six, and when he was all of 26 inches tall.

Bonhams believe the suit should raise about £400. I bet the Theatre Museum can't wait to get its hands on it.

There is a braver's shop in Mitcham, Surrey, run by Cain Brothers.

It's too late for that cottage

I recently wrote about the difficulty of booking holiday cottages in France, where the Government tourist office has had to close its doors to the lengthily waiting list. I now find that such difficulties are not unknown in Britain either.

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I made eight calls before finding any vacancy at all between May and October. None of the

12 property owners or agencies I phoned, covering some 50 cottages in France, could offer anything at all for the school summer holidays.

What use, I asked the AA, can such a guide be, published at this time of year? "There is a danger that some of the places will be booked up when the book is published," they said. "The shortage of this type of accommodation might partly result from the success of our last guide, published in November 1976. We think the book could still be very useful to out-of-season weekend trippers—or for 1979."

You might have thought Jack Jones would have cleared the decks yesterday so that he could go to the Palace and be invested with the CH without having anything else to tug away at his mind. But that is not the Jones way of doing things. Before going to the Palace he was at his desk in Transport House. Then he joined a TUC delegation that called on Dr Owen. That over, he was off to an International Transport Federation conference. The CH business interrupted his flow of words about low-paid seamen but, back from the Palace, he soon picked up the current again, as if nothing unusual had happened to him.



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THE CHALLENGE OF TERROR

kidnapping of Signor Moro is the most direct assault on the political power which Italian terrorists have yet achieved. Signor Moro is the respected leader of the country's governing party and a candidate for the presidential election. His fate must have a profound impact on the public mind. The kidnapping, the tragic shooting, the murders, the kidnappings with which Italy has become familiar in recent years, will be a great tragedy for him personally and for the country. There will be great concern for the new facing such a direct challenge.

It is easy enough to see this as a direct challenge to the decline, yet last year, with kidnapping of Dr Schleier, a similar challenge faced West Germany, which is not in decline. Admittedly, the two countries have certain problems in common, such as over-unemployment, a section of the youth alienated and alienating power in the hands of opposition without an organized party to contain them. These are among factors which contribute to terrorism. But there are also differences too obvious to mention. In Italy, the motive is not the act itself but the act itself. In Germany, the motive is the act itself. In Italy, the act is the act itself. In Germany, the act is the act itself.

YING-FOR DISABILITY

present arrangements for assisting those who suffer from severe disability are pharisaic in their attitude. It is designed to meet the needs of public attention must be given to the case of the disabled child, but they are not the only ones to be affected. Different ways of treating very different types of injury, to bow it was caused, whether it was the result of one else's negligence, and whether that other person insured or can even be held liable. This is the jumble that the Royal Commission on Liability and Compensation for Personal Injury has to sort out.

It is done so by proposing a series of reforms. There is a report, suggests, "a default" compensation for road accidents; an increase in the benefits for the self-employed, and the victims of occupational diseases than sent; and a new benefit for severely handicapped men, whatever the cause of handicap. Together these would involve a "cost extension" of the security system so that it would be provided to those who under existing arrangements must depend upon the state to provide for them.

It is absurd that someone who is insured for no more than a few state sickness and supplementary benefits, and another person injured severely by an insured person, should receive large sums of money. The plight of the children did not seem whether or not the

assertion that we constantly hear that "Britain produces 50 per cent of her own food" is nonsense. It ignores the fact that nearly all our stock food is imported from abroad and all the vast amount of chemicals derives from sources outside this country. There are farms in this country (and their number is slowly growing) that are proving that they could be really self-sufficient in food. If we farmed like the Chinese farmer we would be exporting food.

Sincerely,
JOHN SEYMOUR,
Fanchong Island Farm,
Treforth,
Pembrokeshire.

The vanishing dog collar.
From Canon A. R. Winnett.
Sir, For some of the clergy the dog collar is the symbol of the clerical class and sociological considerations suggested by the Reverend Christopher Armstrong than by the inability or unwillingness of laundries to undertake the washing and starching of linen collars, while self respect and a sense of propriety make us reluctant to encircle our necks with a strip of plastic. A welcome consequence would be a return to the pre-Mid-Victorian white necktie, which serves as a sign of our calling yet is not so distinctive as to mark us out as a caste apart.

Yours faithfully,
A. R. WINNETT,
54 Orchard Way,
Highfield,
Southampton.
March 11.

Israel's retaliation for PLO attack

From The Reverend The Lord Soper.
Sir, It is saddening and depressing that even now, after 30 years of bitter hostility between Arabs and Jews, when at last there is a glimmer of hope that some move towards peace may be achieved, one of the Arab countries, apart from Egypt, saw fit to condemn the PLO's senseless and brutal murder of Israeli civilians. On the contrary, as David Hirst reported (March 14), the Arab states, endemically divided, were, on this occasion unanimous in their endorsement of the massacre which the PLO perpetrated on Saturday, March 11.

The PLO, by its own admission, has set out to destroy the peace talks between Egypt and Israel. It is an organization which can callously take innocent lives to achieve political aims, to be contrasted with the Jewish people in the view of what happened on Saturday, March 11, on can perhaps understand better Israel's obstinacy in refusing to allow a PLO-dominated Palestinian state to be established.

Yours faithfully,
SOPER,
Kingway Hall, WC2,
March 15.

Monetary upheaval

From Lord Balogh.
Sir, The basic cause of the present monetary upheaval is the unprecedented and unpalatable oil surplus of the desert oil countries. This has been between \$25-45 billion per annum and is unlikely to diminish substantially by accelerating their development because the imports of these countries cannot be increased without a grave threat to the nature of the present society and to political stability. As these surpluses must necessarily imply overseas deficits it is no use preaching to Britain, Italy or more recently the United States to "strengthen their currencies" or to "put their house in order". All that these grandiose sentences mean is that the oil will be kicked from one country to another with ever increasing pressure on production and employment.

Very different is the case of the surplus produced by Germany and Japan: these represent the export of employment. The surplus of these two countries goes to the rest of the world. If for reasons (which remind one of the painful ignorance of 1931-33) these countries refuse to share the burden of the OPEC oil surpluses they should left to suffer in their own currencies until they are frozen out of the world markets of manufactures. Under no circumstances should they reap the reward of exchanging their dollar boards into high yielding long-term loans. It is most unfortunate that the scarce currency of the IMF charter, which would have prescribed discriminating import quotas against persistent creditors, has not been invoked thus confirming its lapse.

Yours, etc.
THOMAS BALOGH,
Balliol College,
Oxford.

Repatriation of prisoners

From Prada Bruce Lockhart.
Sir, Like your correspondent Elizabeth Barker (March 8), I remember, and only too painfully, the war years when The Times led the big battalions in pro-Soviet propaganda on a course supposedly plotted by E. H. Carr.

I appreciate the more the honorable agenda you lately made by your forthright exposure of the horrific story of our 1945 compulsory repatriation of prisoners of war to Russia. Particularly welcome is the recommendation in your issue (February 20) and correspondence columns for reforms in the publication of official records to facilitate the work of genuine historians. I have long been preoccupied by the question how it is possible for the true diplomatic history of the war years to be written.

No doubt every specialist has a protective view of his own sphere. What I regarded as my sphere, I had some very modest access to inside information, was the awful problem of Poland—in whose defence, as often seems forgotten—in television series on the "war years" or in the BFI film *Before Midnight*—we and France had declared war.

I have ever since been burdened by doubt how the truth could ever be told of the years leading down to the war, and how many and such powerful interests were vested in truth not being told but concealed, stifled, perverted, contradicted or—simply suppressed.

Yours faithfully,
FRED BRUCE LOCKHART,
34 Holland Street, W8.

Loving Cup millenary

From the Headmaster of Wellington School.
Sir, With the Tower of London at present celebrating its 900th anniversary, it may be of interest to mention another event whose 1000th anniversary is, on March 18, this only came to my notice through attending a City Dinner recently, where it was explained that the Ceremony of the Loving Cup is said to date back to the assassination at Corfe Castle, on March 18, 978, of King Edward the Martyr. It was on his stepmother's command that the assassination was carried out, and it took place while he was drinking from the cup proffered to him by his stepmother. Her son, Eadward the Unready, succeeded to the throne.

From this event has sprung the custom of guarding your neighbour at the table as he drinks from the cup that is being passed round. The ceremony has its origins in the need for security, and ceremonies generally help to provide a sense of continuity and stability within a community. Although the last 30 years have seen an increase in casualness and an evident disdain for some ceremonies, one hopes that this trend has run its course, and that the value and unifying influence of traditional ceremonies on family or community occasions will always be recognized.

Yours faithfully,
G. GARRETT, Headmaster,
The School,
Wellington,
Northamptonshire.
March 13.

Accidents in operations

From Mrs Peregrine Worsthorne.
Sir, I watched with mounting terror the BBC programme showing a series of children crippled for life through an accident or mistake while undergoing a small operation. Not only were the children deprived of any kind of normal life, but their families quite often ruined through trying to obtain damages—and money—essential for the life-long, expensive treatment their helpless conditions required.

I'm myself due to have a small surgical intervention necessitating a general anaesthetic. Should I, for the sake of my relations if not my own, and can I obtain a particular insurance covering the eventuality of some "minor human error" on the part of the anaesthetist, surgeon or nurse?

Yours faithfully,
CLAUDIE WORTHORNE,
6 Kempton Road, SW6.

South African policies and the West

From Mr Donald Woods.
Sir, The South African government has spent a great deal of money on full-page advertisements in the British press designed to counter-act my United Nations Security Council speech calling for economic sanctions against the apartheid regime.

These advertisements carry statements by selected black spokesmen officially recognized by the Vorster government. The fact of their recognition as part of the apartheid structure devalues their argument against sanctions.

The majority of blacks in South Africa reject Bantustan leaders like Chief Buthezi and Chief Sebe (Chief Buthezi was even expelled from the funeral of Robert Sobukwe and Mr Reddy and Mr Bergins, of the government-backed South African Indian Council and Coloured Council respectively, are political nonentities in black politics in South Africa. The real leaders of black South Africa are not Buthezi, Mafeni, Sobukwe and Biko, but the thousands of black people, and has total support from no more than 10 per cent. That is why it has to be imposed by force, and maintained by force. And the institutional instruments of that force, military and paramilitary, are at the moment maintained by grace of economic cooperation from the West.

In my appeal to the Western members of the Security Council I pointed out that such cooperation is in direct conflict with the basic ideals of Western democracy and should therefore be systematically dismantled.

If the Vorster government genuinely fears that this would bring hardship to its black citizens, it could immediately arrest the process of Western disengagement by announcing the calling of a national convention for the purpose of allowing all South Africans through elected representatives to negotiate a new constitution acceptable to the majority of the people.

The Vorster government has millions to spend on advertisements. If I had such resources I would place advertisements carrying statements by all the genuine black leaders of the majority in South Africa, if access could be gained to the jail cells in which are to be found all of them not yet killed by Vorster's security police.

Yours faithfully,
DONALD WOODS,
c/o Paddington Press Ltd,
21 Beckett Street, W1,
March 15.

Britain and Rhodesia

From the Bishop of Maseru.
Sir, In 1901 the second Bishop of Maseru, William Thomas Gaul, wrote: "I believe that Eoelias has been guilty again and again of sins of negligence and ignorance for the past 50 years in South Africa, as well as in her other colonies. She has shirked her responsibilities, shuffled out of her engagements, and played wiggly-waggle with her White man's burden."

As seventh Bishop of Maseru, I echo those words 77 years later.

By maintaining a hesitant neutrality with regard to the present movement of this country towards African majority rule, Britain is toying with an apologetic appeasement of terrorist leaders for fear of offending some of her trading partners.

Should those leaders obtain power by the force of their communist weapons, those who have provided the weapons will be one significant step nearer to total control of the Cape sea routes. At that time the puny oil rigs in the North Sea, so tragically vulnerable to a hostile commando force, would do nothing to save Britain from rapid capitulation to an economic blockade.

Yours,
PAUL BURROUGH,
Bishop of Maseru,
PO Box UAT,
Salisbury,
Rhodesia,
March 10.

The politics of race

From Mr J. Sparrow.
Sir, On your front page today Mr Duke of the Ku-Klux-Klan is described as a "racist" and a "reactionary". I would like to ask you, and through you your readers, what these words mean; and I should like to be told whether I am a racist (or a reactionary) myself.

I am not a member of the Ku-Klux-Klan, nor of the National Front, and I do not approve of the activities of either of those bodies (though I think that their members should be allowed the same freedom to state and to publicize their views as is allowed to their opponents). But I believe that races exist, and that in a country where a distinctive culture has been created and maintained by an indigenous (or long established) race, it should be a legitimate aim to preserve that culture by maintaining the racial purity of the nation that created it.

"Keep Barbados Black!" seems to me a legitimate (and, indeed, a laudable) aim. So does "Keep Britain White." Whether in a given case it is possible to maintain the racial purity of a nation, and (if it is) what steps should, or may, be taken in order to maintain it—these may well be difficult questions to answer. But that the maintenance of racial purity in a nation, black or white, may be a desirable end, and that if one thinks it is a desirable end one should be at liberty to say so—these seem to me to be incontrovertible propositions.

Am I then a racist? And is that necessarily a bad thing to be?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN SPARROW,
Beechwood House,
Hilley Turn,
Oxford.
March 13.

New British Library

From Mr John Lawson.
Sir, While welcoming the architects' project (March 8) for the new British Library, I would like to support wholeheartedly the plea of Mr Weinreb (March 9) for account to be taken of, and provision made for, the ancillary services, trades and small industries which a great library both requires and generates.

Not all that many years ago Birmingham boasted a number of antiquarian bookshops. After much planning and rebuilding the dry centre finds itself barren of antiquarian bookshops. This may not be the future fate of the London bookshops (although note the withering

Don't blame the toad

From Mrs M. E. Parsons.
Sir, I must protest at the untruthful remarks (copied from a disgraceful article in the Daily Mirror last year) concerning the behaviour of toads towards gold fish which you have printed today (March 15). This is how myths are propagated and for such a paper as yours to persist in this fallacy to the detriment of the much maligned and ill-treated toad is disgraceful.

I have many gold fish in two ponds. For years each spring hundreds of toads visit these ponds engaging in eager song and dance in competition for the more rare female toads that chance their way. Frequently in warmer weather they form the extraordinary Knot of Toads which can become so heavy that it sinks to the bottom of the pond and writhes there for a time.

Never, in the closest watch upon these amazing activities of these enchanting little creatures, have I ever seen one reach out to a gold

Saving historic ships

From Mr Frank Carr.
Sir, In referring to HMS Discovery, Mr Richard Gould-Adams (March 9) highlights the lamentable fact that public funds are not available to save historic ships as they are to preserve historic buildings. Yet in this country we pride ourselves, or should do, that since the days of the first Queen Elizabeth our greatness as an island people has been founded upon the sea. Reason enough, one might suppose, for ensuring that the few remaining ships which are the treasures of our maritime heritage should receive most favoured treatment among our national monuments.

Unfortunately this is not yet so; and in countries overseas a similar lack of appreciation and urgency applies. Too often ships are regarded only as the unwelcome poor relations of castles and cathedrals. Yet historic ships are in truth the cathedrals of the sea, wherein we may both sense and honour the spirit of our ancestors. No model or picture can inspire the same emotion.

The volume of letters reaching me since your publication (November 19) of my plea for the creation of a World Ship Trust to encourage the preservation of historic ships clearly indicates how many are thinking on these lines. In particular there is strong support for the establishment of a small office in central London which would provide facilities for the active consultation and collaboration between the major ship preservation societies of the world, leading eventually to the preparation of a register of historic craft worthy of preservation.

In the United States action has led to the formation of a Ship Trust Committee comprising the Presidents of the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, the National Maritime Historical Society and the American Sail Training Association, plus the Director of the San Francisco Maritime Museum, with myself as International Chairman.

Here in Britain we have opened a World Ship Trust Project Account at the National Bank of Wales, 19 Fleet Street, EC4, so that contributions from well wishers and friends may be used to help in meeting the promotional costs of drawing up a formal constitution and obtaining charitable status.

It is now hoped that this may mark the opening of a new era in which ship preservation throughout the world will at last come into its own.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK CARR,
10 Park Gate,
Blackheath, SE3,
March 12.

Conditions in Yugoslavia

From Mr Steffen Clissold.
Sir, In your leader welcoming President Tito's recent visit you rightly stress that any threat to Yugoslavia's independence would be a threat to peace. But threats may have not only external but internal sources, such as pressures generated by the unbridled aspirations of national groups or by frustrated demands for basic civil liberties.

Despite last November's martial amnesty, Yugoslavia's jails still have their prisoners of conscience and her citizens are liable to harsh penalties for activities which no democracy should deem an offence. A recent case is that of the distinguished pharmacologist Dr Novakovic, sentenced to 12 years' hard labour, with confiscation of all property, for having visited a former Yugoslav Vice-Premier now living here in exile.

Since defying Stalin in 1948, Yugoslavia has gained respect for favouring non-aligned policies abroad and a measure of political experimentation at home. But disregard of human rights is no safeguard of national independence.

Yours faithfully,
STEFFEN CLISSOLD,
7 Cleveland Gardens, W2.

Commemorating soldiers

From Mr J. B. Conacher.
Sir, When General Gubbins writes in your Letters column of March 14 that for a long time after the fall of France Britain "faced the world alone" he forgets that Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa all declared war independently in 1939. The combined armed forces of these four dominions, not to mention those of four governments in exile, added considerably to Britain's armed strength in the days before the entry of the United States into the war. This fact in no way detracts from Britain's splendid achievement to those grim days, but should not be alone.

Yours sincerely,
J. B. CONACHER,
11 Prince Albert Road, NW1.

From Mr Adam Ciolek.
Sir, General Sir John Gubbins is wrong on one point in his otherwise convincing letter (March 14). It is not true that for a long time after the fall of France, Britain faced the world alone. Britain and Britain's armies were fighting alone all over the world. Polish troops fought alongside British armies all over the world ever since the fall of France. Is it fair to pass in silence over a faithful ally when the fighting is over?

Yours respectfully,
ADAM CIOLEK,
Former Member of
Polish Parliament,
9 Balmuir Gardens, S.W.15.

Winged nuisances

From Mrs Sandra Hillberry.
Sir, If 30 hens + 20 ducks + nine geese + two cockerels + a peahen = intolerable nuisance to five people, what do 50 Jumbos + 40 BAC 1-11s + 35 707s + four Airbuses + a Concorde = to many thousands of people on Heathrow flight paths?

An exact analogy cannot, of course, be made, because although you can take a peahen to court, no such action is possible against the unfathered variety.

Yours faithfully,
S. HILLBERRY,
Apple Tree Cottage,
New Road,
Esher,
Surrey.

VENEZUELA

As the Prince of Wales begins an official visit this Special Report examines an ambitious country where falling oil revenues have restrained expansion plans but which still offers wide opportunities for British business

Opec pays lip-service to Pérez pacesetting initiative

Roger Vielvoye

tending the freeze on oil prices—Saudi Arabia and Iran—were strong enough to force their views on the rest of the world. A few of whom were in a mood to increase prices and then give the proceeds away.

With the declining dollar eating away at the value of oil revenues, the majority of members wanted a 5 to 7 per cent price rise to ensure sufficient funds for their domestic investment programmes. Ten of the 13 Opec members, including Venezuela, are now net borrowers of investment funds.

Observers are still trying to establish why Venezuela's strategy was blown so far off course. It has been said that after the considerable success that President Pérez and his oil minister Señor Valentín Hernández Acosta have had in healing the rift in the Opec ranks caused by two-tier pricing, they had become over-confident. The possibility also exists that the scare stories of the December meeting being postponed rather than being the subject of another unseemly wrangle over prices could have pushed the President into what he saw as a compromise.

**Final decision
avoided
public rebuff**

Rather than give President Pérez a public rebuff by doing absolutely nothing, the ministers devised a face-saving operation. While they ignored his plea for a price increase to be devoted to helping the Third World—in fact they failed to agree among themselves, and by default allowed the six-month price freeze to continue until the middle of the year and probably until the start of 1979—in the final communiqué they decided to hold further consultations "to make new efforts towards strengthening the solidarity among the

These countries will want to use the next increase, probably in 1979, entirely for domestic purposes, and in the meantime any help for the developing countries should come from the Opec Fund. A price increase devoted to the Third World is not ruled out but it would have to come much later—possibly in the early 1980s when it is hoped that the market for crude oil will be able to stand an additional price increase without producing a reciprocal slump in demand.

Whether or not Venezuela



Maintenance at an oil installation in north-west Venezuela, and (right) politics on a lamppost in Caracas.



was right to have chosen last December's meeting in Caracas to tackle the problems of servicing Third World debt, the question of how the Third World is to survive with such massive financial commitments to the industrialized world is very real and growing all the time.

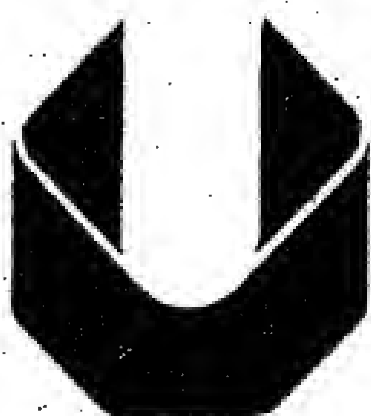
As President Pérez pointed out in his opening speech, the developing countries that do not produce oil increased their debts from \$40,000m in 1973 to \$180,000m in 1977. Ten years ago the proportion of debt in the private banking sector was only 20 per cent. It is now 40 per cent of \$180,000m. This means that nearly half of the debt servicing comes from very expensive monies supplied by the commercial banks.

Had President Pérez's proposal been accepted, the Third World's debts would have been reduced by \$7,000m to \$11,000m. Venezuelan sources conceded that this was not a really significant amount and the administrative difficulties in deciding which countries qualified for debt relief and by how much would have been formidable.

According to the Venezuelans, the objective of the President's proposals was to set an example to the nations to whom the Third World is in debt. The President was evidently much impressed by Sweden's action in cancelling its debts to the Third World, although some Opec sources think it strange that he did not reinforce this action by cancelling Venezuela's own debts from other South American countries.

Cancelling debts is not an act of charity or a gift, he said. It is a clever business deal through which new roads for international trade could be opened, rescuing the world economy from one of its weaknesses.

The author is Energy Correspondent, The Times.

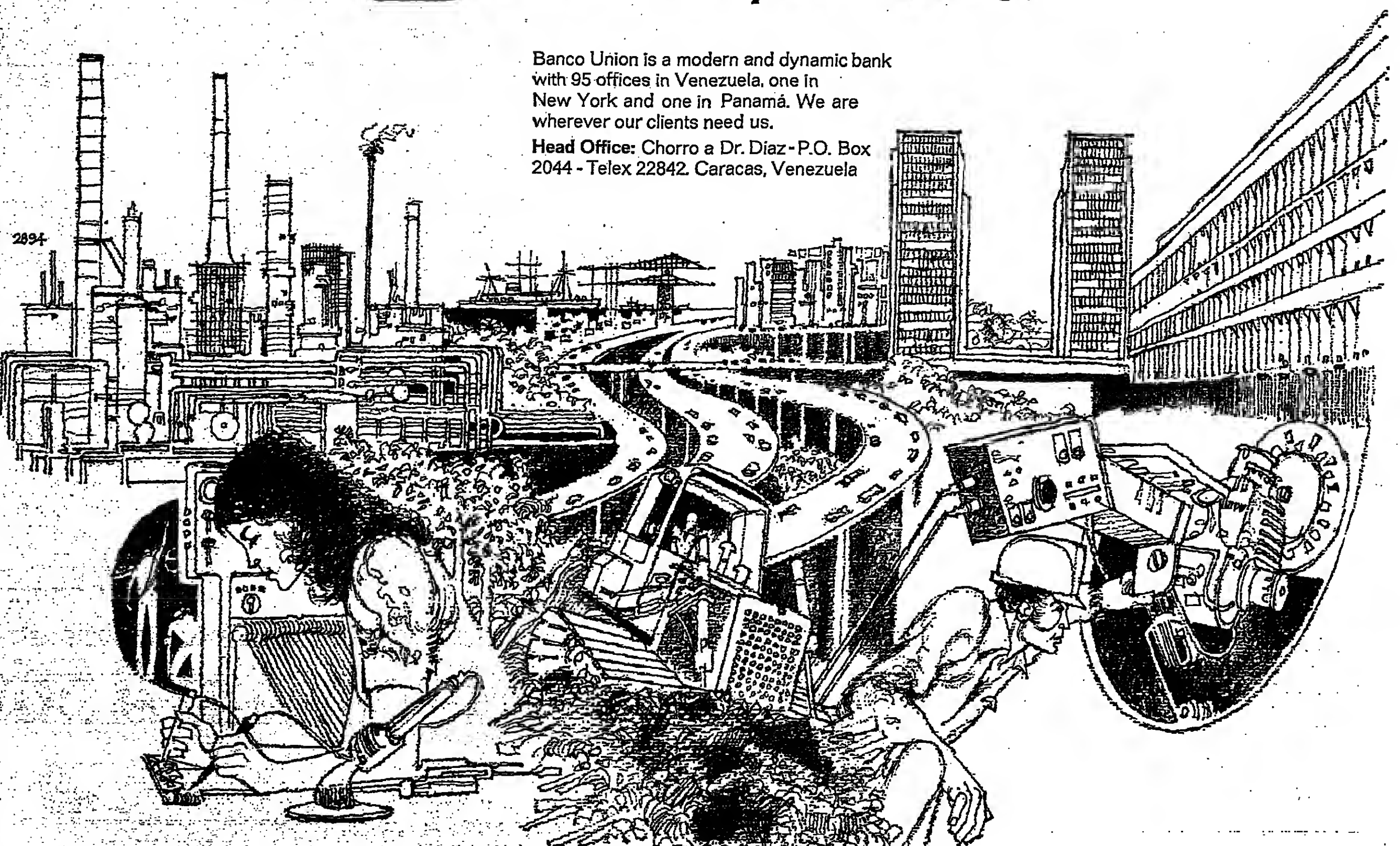


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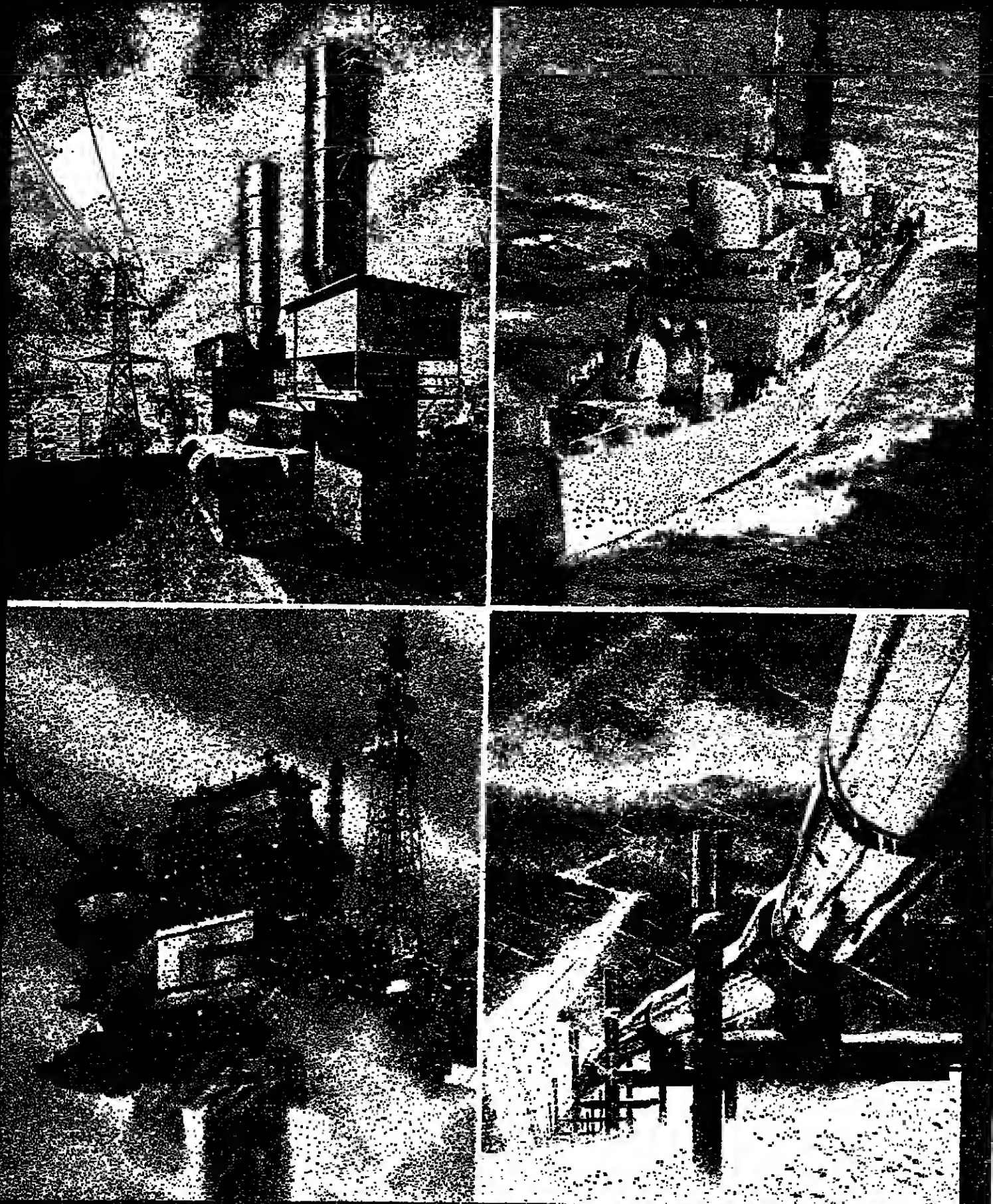
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For further information in Venezuela: Sir Raymond Smith, K.B.E., Edificio Las Americas, Calle Real de Sabana Grande, Caracas 105.

Ambitious development programme continues apace

by Peter Godfrey

Early this year some disconcerting signs began to appear in the buoyant Venezuelan economy. The Government, whose programme of national development has, until now, been characterized by massive investment and economic confidence, began to show a new-found shrewdness and awareness that the country's wealth, founded on petroleum, was not unending.

Average daily production of crude oil by the state-owned Petroleos de Venezuela was 1,700,000 barrels up to mid-February, significantly below the Government's professed aim of striking a daily average of 2,200,000 in 1978.

Although production rose subsequently by 100,000 barrels a day, the Government of President Carlos Andrés Pérez acknowledged its concern by introducing a unprecedented series of spending cuts. Vacant Government posts are to remain vacant, state expenditure on property, furnishings and official business is to be rationalized, the outlay on some development projects which do not have a high priority will be reduced and their completion staggered over a longer period.

Although the Government was characteristically coy about producing figures, it is thought that the economy measures could amount to a fixed investment of Bs223,673m (at present prices) in the Venezuelan economy over the five-year period, 53 per cent of it provided by the public sector. A measure of the plan's ambitiousness is that the total financial input is more than three times as great as that of the previous five-year plan.

The plan provides for a fixed investment of Bs223,673m (at present prices) in the Venezuelan economy over the five-year period, 53 per cent of it provided by the public sector. A measure of the plan's ambitiousness is that the total financial input is more than three times as great as that of the previous five-year plan.

It is unlikely that President Pérez will risk imposing a rise in the price of petrol at home, as effective a vote-buyer as could be devised. Venezuelans buy petrol at the subsidized knock-down price of Bs0.35 (about 4p) a litre, enabling a taxi-driver to keep his outsize Chevrolet on the congested streets of

Caracas for very little outlay. It is in Caracas, a phenomenon among Latin American cities (and, some would say, more American than Latin), that many of the contrasts in Venezuela's economy are to be seen. Office blocks, lavish precincts and residential buildings are being put up with noticeable speed, while makeshift shanty towns stretch towards the cloud-topped hills which form their backdrop. The only way left to build now in Caracas is upward.

The bustling boom city of nouveaux riches, where people earn a lot and spend a lot, coexists with a degree of urban squalor, a strain on educational, health and social resources, and a dearth of cultural activity.

Despite recent economic apprehensions, the ambitious development programme initiated by President Pérez's Democratic Action (AD) regime continues apace, its backbone is the fifth national plan, a blueprint for the country's development from 1976 to 1980.

The momentum of the plan at this stage is so great that it will almost certainly continue with only minor modifications after the general election in December, whether the next government is formed by AD or by the principal opposition party, the Christian Democrats (Copei).

The plan provides for a fixed investment of Bs223,673m (at present prices) in the Venezuelan economy over the five-year period, 53 per cent of it provided by the public sector.

A measure of the plan's ambitiousness is that the total financial input is more than three times as great as that of the previous five-year plan. The main areas earmarked for public sector investment are, in order of size of financial outlay: the oil industry (Bs23,250m), electricity supply (Bs17,677m), transport and communications (Bs16,881m), steelmaking (Bs15,370m) and agriculture (Bs8,205m).

The most notable individual large-scale project, and one of the most successful, is the development of the inland region of Guayana, centred on the Orinoco river. Under the auspices of the Venezuelan Development Corporation (CVG), set up as a semi-autonomous body in 1960, a big industrial complex has been developed and is being expanded.

The Guri hydroelectric power station has a capacity of 1,650MW and produced 9,916,000 megawatt-hours of electricity in 1976. The height of the dam is to be raised, giving it a capacity of more than nine million kilowatts within the next 10 years and making it one of the world's largest.

Work is on schedule with the expansion of aluminium production, for which public investment under the development plan totals Bs5,560m. The CVG, together with foreign partners, is building two aluminium and one alumina plant, with a total production capacity of 400,000 tonnes annually. Expansion of the steel-making plant near Ciudad Guayana is under way, with the aim of quadrupling its capacity to 1,200,000 tonnes. High-grade iron ore for the plant is obtained from deposits nearby.

Venezuela is anxious to become self-sufficient in steel, having found that, despite large iron ore deposits, it earns less from its exports of iron than it pays for the import of finished steel products. It aims to achieve that objective, and become an exporter of steel, by the end of the development plan period.

It is perhaps worth noting that between 4 and 5 per cent of Venezuelan imports are British. British exports, primarily machinery, drink and consumer goods, are the largest per capita consumption of scotch in the world and manufactured goods, totalling £175.2m worth in 1977, out of £964.6m worth to the whole of Latin America.

Britain still lags behind competitors such as Germany, Japan, Canada and Italy, and representatives in Caracas feel that there is room for expansion, perhaps to a share of 8 per cent of the country's imports.

Questioned recently about the progress of the national development plan, Dr Lorenzo Azzuppa Marturel, Venezuela's minister of planning, pinpointed some of the difficulties being faced in trying to create a broader-based economy than that traditionally oriented to oil wealth.

"We have a shortage of human resources at technical, administrative and managerial levels, because we are expanding too fast to have time to prepare people," he said. "We have to slow down."

Dr Marturel said that at the same time there was an urgent need to generate jobs under the plan for a population three-quarters of which was under 25. The plan aims to create 167,000 jobs a year until 1980. Several

thousand young Venezuelans are studying abroad under Government scholarship programmes.

There are doubts, however, whether the national plan, despite large investments in education and welfare, can keep pace with an annual increase of nearly 4 per cent in the population of 12,500,000.

"We have started special birth control programmes, but they are at the social research stage," Dr Marturel said. "We do not have an established programme yet."

While Dr Marturel was satisfied with the general progress of the plan, the point of having to put a brake on it, especially in the private sector whose contribution, he said, had been 70 per cent higher than expected, he admitted some weak spots in transportation, such as the need to increase the capacity of the country's ports.

He also picked out paraffin chemicals as an industry where expansion had been retarded, and indicated that the problem of urban slums had yet to be fully tackled. "We cannot develop everything at the same time," he said.

The Central Bank president expected Venezuela's inflation rate this year to be slightly higher than last year's figure of 8.1 per cent. "But in any case below 10 per cent."

He regarded the Government's new economic cuts as a case of prevention being better than cure, and saw no immediate cause for alarm in the possibility that daily oil production might fall short of the 2,200,000 barrels target for 1978.

Dr Losada admitted, however, that there were some potentially ominous signs in Venezuela's recent economic performance, notably a 30 per cent increase in imports during 1977.

Although much of this was capital goods for the development plan, it included a sizeable proportion of consumer and luxury goods. He also welcomed the Government's move to try to eliminate unnecessary expenditure. "All the time everybody is asking for more money. This is a good way of putting a stop to it."

Financial wastefulness and a loose rein on public spending have been constant themes of critics of the Pérez Government. Despite the strain which is at present being put on its economy, Venezuela has the financial resources to withstand and surmount portents of crisis. Besides being supported by the Government's domestic and international reserves, the fifth national plan can draw specifically on the Venezuelan Investment Fund (FIV), established by the Government to hold superfluous oil revenue, with assets standing at Bs28,000m last July.

It remains to be seen, however, whether President Pérez's Government, highly conscious of electoral considerations, will attempt more fundamental and perhaps unpopular changes in public spending policy than slowing down marginally the frenetic pace of national development, and papering over the economic cracks which have appeared.

The country's public debt increased by 55 per cent last year, and its external debt has more than doubled over the past five years to stand at \$4,700m at the end of 1977. It has already been augmented by a \$1,300m loan early this year.

Dr Benito Raúl Losada, the president of the Central Bank of Venezuela, points to the country's large international reserves as a cushion against economic setbacks.

In a recent interview with *The Times* in Caracas, Dr Losada predicted a rate of growth for the country this year of between 8 and 9 per cent, similar to last year's figure. "That is a good rate. I would not like to see it any faster because we do not have the resources to cope with it," he said. "Faster than that means inflation."

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Rising national debt is no cause for alarm

by Nigel Bance

The Venezuela Government will have difficulty in repeating the terms and conditions of the 1,200m Eurocredit borrowed on the international capital market last January.

The Eurocredit is now flooded with Venezuelan paper and the belief among the Eurobankers is that Venezuela will be unable to repeat the 1 per cent margin above the London Interbank offered rate for Eurodollars (LIBOR). The underwriters were not successful in selling this loan. For further loans this year Venezuela might have to accept a margin of 1 per cent instead.

Venezuela first made its entry into the medium-term Eurocredit market in 1974 when it borrowed \$67.5m. The following year it borrowed \$200m. The first of Venezuela's jumbo-sized loans came in 1976 when it borrowed \$1,000m. For the year 1977, the Government borrowed \$1,035.5m. The Republic of Venezuela's \$1,000m loan in 1976 was at a margin of 1 per cent above LIBOR with a maturity of seven years.

In 1977, Venezuela increased its borrowing by \$1,739m which included another big loan of \$1,200m with a lower margin of 1 per cent and over seven years. The recent \$1,200m was over 10 years.

There is no cause for alarm at the rising amount of Venezuelan debt. Venezuela is still regarded as underdeveloped. Official reserves topped \$9,000m for the first time, although partly as a result of foreign borrowing, which is equivalent to 16 months of imports. The Fondo de Inversiones de Venezuela holds assets of \$6,900m. Venezuela is able to command the best terms of any developing country that borrows in the Euro-market.

The foreign loans are being spent on building up the communications, services and industry, so lessening the country's dependence on oil. In only a brief period foundations have been laid to turn Venezuela into a modern industrialized society. The fifth national plan, if successful, will turn Venezuela into the most modern economy in South America.

The plan covers the period 1976 to 1980 and expenditure is twice the fourth national plan of 1970 to 1974. The target is to achieve growth in real gdp of 8.2 per cent a year. Growth was nearly

on target in 1977 with an estimated rate of 8 per cent but in 1976 growth was only 7.6 per cent.

The total public debt of the Venezuela Government is forecast to reach \$10,200m (Bs 44,000m) by the end of 1978 according to the Finance Minister, Señor Luis Lozano. He has said that \$250m of foreign credits in 1978 would contribute towards refinancing existing debt. At the end of 1977 some 50 per cent of the Government's public debt was external. Both directly and indirectly the amount was \$3,800m (Bs 16,200m). From 1973 to 1977 external debt has risen 13 times.

What is giving cause for concern is the sharp fall in oil revenue. It has been Government policy to hold down production to save the oil reserves and rely on increased oil prices to make up the difference. The Government has successfully

scaled down production levels from a peak of 3,366 million barrels a day in 1973 and has lengthened the life of proved reserves from 11.3 years to 21.8 years.

Success in the Eurocredit market has led Venezuela to turn in the Eurobond market. In 1977 Venezuela offered three bond issues totalling \$350m in New York and London. The Government has also sold 20,000m yen Republic of Venezuela bonds on the Tokyo market. However, Venezuela has not been as successful on the Eurobond market with several issues falling below par.

Moving into debt has not distracted Venezuela from its substantial aid programme. There is no doubt that Venezuela has expanded too quickly and is suffering the consequences. Imports, which were at record levels of \$8,400m in

1977, have risen fourfold since 1973 and were mainly responsible for the balance of payments deficit of \$100m in 1977. It was the first deficit since 1967. Inflation is rising fast. Although official figures put the inflation rate at 8.1 per cent, that rate is probably twice as high, according to the World Bank. Money supply has almost doubled in two years. The Government has realized that it is overspending and has recently trimmed the budget. Unfortunately, the 5 per cent of the budget for current expenditure and wages is still rising.

The Eurobankers are not concerned about Venezuela's indebtedness. They are more concerned that Venezuela as one of the best credit risks in the international markets.

The author is on the staff of Euromoney.

BORROWINGS IN THE EUROCREDIT MARKET

Borrower	Amount \$m	Margin above LIBOR %	Maturity years
1976			
Venezolana de Ferrocarriles Bozal CA	130	1.500	5.0
CA Venezolana de Desarrollo	10.0	1.750	6.0
The Republic of Venezuela	1000.0	1.125	7.0
Arrendadora Industrial Venezolana CA	6.0	2.250	3.0
Aluminio Del Cerón SA (ALUCASA) in conjunction with Fondo de Inversiones de Venezuela	45.0	n/a	n/a
1977			
Cervecería Polar CA and Cervecería Polar del Centro CA	20.0	1.250	2.0
Inversiones del Transporte CA	15.2	1.250	5.0
The Republic of Venezuela	1200.0	1.000	7.0
With Banco Central de Venezuela as fiscal agent for the Republic CA Venezolana de Desarrollo	12.0	1.750	6.0
Inversiones y Promociones Turísticas SA	40.0	1.500	5.0
Arrendadora Industrial Venezolana CA	5.0	1.500	5.0
The Republic of Venezuela	350.0	.875	7.0
Banco Central de Venezuela as fiscal agent for the Republic			
Corporación Andina de Fomento-CAF	50.0	1.250	7.0
Gomdimá	7.9	.750	2.0
1978			
Republic of Venezuela	1200.0	.750	10.0

Source: Euromoney Syndication Service

PUBLIC DEBT (Bs million)

	External		Internal		Total		Grand Total
	Direct (a)	Indirect (b)	Direct (a)	Indirect (b)	Direct (a)	Indirect (b)	
1973	1,126	2,787	1,423	1,800	2,549	4,587	
1974	879	2,414	3,647	1,711	4,526	4,125	
1975	831	2,394	3,725	2,621	4,526	5,215	
1976	9,118*	2,170	4,108	3,852	13,226	6,122	
1977**	14,450	1,838	8,032	6,568	20,482	8,424	

(a) Debt directly incurred by the republic; (b) Debt guaranteed by the republic or incurred or guaranteed by decentralized state institutions. *Includes issue of bonds in respect of nationalization of the oil industry. **Provisional estimates.

Source: Grindlays Bank

Venezuela opens its doors to tourism investment

The Venezuela National Government has created special incentives for investment in tourism development. The investor in Venezuela can carry out all the plans he has in mind. Venezuela is a country with a consolidated democratic system.

The doorway to Latin America, Venezuela is a tourist country par excellence, with thousands of visitors every year, stable currency, a thriving economy, and a young, hospitable, hard-working population which assures the success of any investment in the tourist field.

For Venezuela, investment in tourism is exempt from Decision 24 of the Andean Sub-Regional Pact which regulates foreign investment. Profits made on invest-

ments in tourism development and services are also exempt from income tax. Private banks in Venezuela are authorized to finance tourism projects and a preferential system of interests established and financed by the Corporación de Turismo through Venezuelan banking institutions has been created.

In Venezuela there are organizations for co-financing of tourism, developments like the Fondo Nacional de Desarrollo Urbano, through long term, low interest credits, as well as other mechanisms for credit from State organizations.

Far from being a gamble, tourism investment in

Venezuela is a growing and productive activity. With the support of the State through guarantees, credits and other forms of direct or indirect financing, private investment in Venezuela tourism becomes more important every day.

This private investment in hotels, tourism complexes,

air, sea and land transportation is supported and strengthened by the participation of the State with its construction of the tourism and service infrastructure as a further contribution to its success.

All administration processes related to investments in tourism are speedily completed, and the investors receive the required information without delay.

Our democratic type of government guarantees local and foreign investors a dependable and secure base for the recuperation of the capital invested and the export of profits produced.

For more information, contact Corporación de Turismo de Venezuela, Apartado 50200, Caracas.

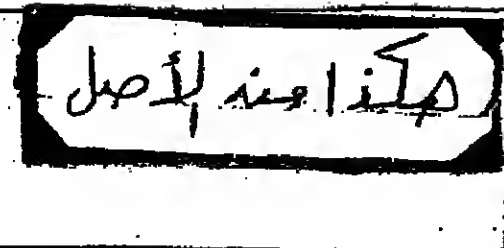


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Money supply growth slows but still likely to exceed ceiling

Whitmore Correspondent

Money supply growth in the year to February 1978 has slowed to 12.1 per cent, but is still likely to exceed the 12.5 per cent ceiling set by the Government.

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seas last month. Here the upturn was £296m for the latest monthly increase for some time.

In part this reflected the recent changes in the financing of lending for exports, but there was also an increase in the total volume of demand for export finance.

The reaction of the gilt market to the February figures was that they were very much in line with expectation. The market is now far more relaxed about the monetary outlook, particularly since the authorities have been able to sell moderate quantities of gilts over the past few days.

In addition, the recent figures for the central government borrowing requirements in February have added further weight to the belief that the public sector borrowing requirement for the full financial year is likely to emerge at comfortably under £5,000m.

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Inquiry says travel group board acted largely as a rubber stamp

Court Line management was 'inadequate'

By Nicholas Hirst

Four directors of Court Line, the travel and shipping group which collapsed in 1974 leaving 40,000 holiday-makers stranded, were accused of "a serious dereliction of duties" by the Department of Trade inspectors in a final report on the affair, published yesterday.

The four are: managing director Mr John Young, the late Sir John Briggs, Mr Jim Venus and Mr J. W. Chapman, who are all accused of having made profits out of a private company called Marine Leasing which they ought to have disclosed to Court Line, which, in the opinion of the inspectors, they ought to have paid to Court Line.

"We believe the reason for setting up Marine Leasing for those concerned was to make a personal profit which they were hoping to do without anybody knowing," the inspectors say.

All the directors share some of the blame for the group's collapse according to the report prepared under the Companies Act by Mr James Comyn, QC, accountant Mr Douglas Morphet, and Mr John Hamilton, a barrister.

"The informal manner in which decisions were taken together with the absence of proper management reporting systems, undoubtedly contributed to the collapse of Court Line," the inspectors say.

In our view none of the directors can be absolved for allowing the continuation of a position where the board of Court Line acted largely as a rubber stamp.

But despite the collapse the report has praise for the management for its development of the first covered-in shipyard at Appledore and it confirms their interim comments in July, 1975, that there was no fraudulent trading, and that, despite the harsh words of holiday-makers, the group ceased to trade at the correct time under the law.

However, the inspectors conclude that the last set of published accounts produced by the group before its collapse for the year to September 30, 1973, did not balance give a true and fair view of the state of the company at that time.

With a minor exception the auditors, Robson Rhodes, gave an unqualified opinion of the accounts.

The inspectors put the blame on the directors who, they say, had an optimistic view of events. "It appears to us that whenever there was a doubt about the possible methods of application of accounting practices, Court Line chose the method which reacted most favourably on the profit for the year."

The report continues: "We do not believe this happened by accident."

The merits of Robson Rhodes who in a statement yesterday adhered to their audit opinion of 1974 on the information then available to them, is recognized by the inspectors, though they say they do not always agree with them.

Both Robson Rhodes and Peat Marwick Mitchell are criticized, however, for failing to qualify the accounts of

Clarksons Holidays, which Court Line acquired in 1973.

The story of Court Line, according to the report, "is one of humble beginnings, rapid diversification over a wide field, very heavy borrowings, an extensive and disastrous incursion into the Caribbean, inadequate overall management and a share of ill-luck. It is also the story of one leading personality—the managing director, Mr John Young."

The reasons for its collapse were that it was unable to weather the serious setback created by the oil crisis of 1973. It was the cumulative effect of this crisis on the shipping, aviation and leisure divisions, when the cash that might otherwise have been available had been pushed into Caribbean ventures, that brought the company down.

On the way to collapse, however, there were serious management deficiencies and the inspectors find much to criticize. Mr Young was undoubtedly the dominant figure within the group. He had a remarkably optimistic view of business to an extent that he may have clouded the judgment of his fellow directors on matters which required a more cautious approach.

Apart from the Marine Leasing criticism, the inspectors give a detailed account of a complicated agreement with Bankers Trust International in which the taking over of Doxford and Sunderland shipbuilders.

The inspectors question whether the arrangements entered into were in

breach of section 54 of the Companies Act 1948 which prohibits a company from buying its own shares or lending money to buy its own shares.

Court Line ended up paying nearly £1m as an indemnity to BTL in March, 1974, against the price of its own shares, but no indication of any loan indemnity was given in the 1973 accounts. The group is strongly criticized for not having taken legal advice on entering the agreement and for disregarding advice when it was given.

Even stronger criticism is meted out over a loan given to Mr Donald MacQueen, aviation director of Clarksons Holidays before it was taken over by Court Line. This loan, first of £100,000 and later reduced after a repayment to £20,000, was to refinance borrowings Mr MacQueen had made to purchase shares in Doxford and Sunderland Shipbuilders, which were transferred to Court Line shares on the takeover. The liquidators have received £25,000 from Mr MacQueen.

The loan was never mentioned at board level and its existence was deliberately and effectively concealed in the books and not disclosed in any published accounts for 1972 when it was made.

"We regard the transaction as discreditable and the cause of serious loss," the inspectors say. The inspectors criticize the ordering of two Lockheed TriStars to use on five-year charter to Clarksons before it was taken over.

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Arsenal co-op chiefs facing a pay blast

The last full-time directors of one of Britain's biggest and previously most successful retail co-operative societies, the £124m Royal Arsenal Society, are facing a revolt by customer shareholders.

It comes on the eve of transfer of control, after 57 years, to a part-time committee.

The society's annual report and accounts may be rejected at meetings called for next week because the retiring board has apparently raised its salaries even though the shareholders in December voted against a proposed rise of £1,250 per director. The dispute has been worsened because the accounts show a net loss before tax of £963,744 for the year ended January, 1978, and the society has unexpectedly borrowed £2m from its banks.

A row over salaries is somewhat unattractive, as the Royal Arsenal is the only retail co-operative society directly affiliated to the Labour Party. As the increases voted by the board to itself are not disclosed, it is not known whether the Government's pay guidelines have been breached.

Mr Richard Balfe, the society's own political secretary is organizing the revolt. He had circulated some active shareholders alleging "extremely disquieting features" in the annual report, which disclosed a net loss—after allocations and apart from tax—for the first time since the war.

Last December, shareholders considered a report of a special tribunal recommending a salary increase of £1,250 per board member. The proposal was defeated by just nine votes.

But the annual report, just issued, states: "Committee salaries have been increased in line with the awards made to some senior staff for additional responsibilities in the management of the society."

It also discloses a substantial cut in the rate of dividend returned to customers by way of dividend stamps, blamed on the fierce supermarket price war started by Tesco after it dropped Green Shield trading stamps.

Mr Balfe is proposing that rejection of the accounts and board report is the only way to stop the increase in salaries awarded by the board to itself.

He stresses that the society remains firmly based, and with its assets the adverse trading results were not a disaster.

Board salaries stood at £6,947 in September, 1976, and in September, 1977, were £7,642. The latest figure is not disclosed.

The whole situation is complicated in that the members of the board are making way for a part-time committee, an historic change.

Before next week's meeting will be another special tribunal report recommending special awards of between £1,250 and £2,000 for loss of office, in addition to the contested salary rises which relate to protected pensions and other arrangements for existing board members.

Royal Arsenal trades over a wide area of South London, Kent and Sussex and has 428,883 customer-members.

Maurice Corina

Lucas closing five factories to reorganize aerospace division

By Clifford Webb

Lucas Industries, the largest aircraft components manufacturer outside the United States, is to close five factories in a major reorganization of its aerospace division.

About 2,000 of the 12,000 jobs in the division will disappear over the next two years. Wherever possible the cuts will be achieved by natural wastage, early retirement and reassignment to other parts of the group.

The factories earmarked for closure are Liverpool (Victor Works), Bradford, Shipley, Hemel Hempstead No 2, and a foundry in Coventry. A new self-contained factory will be opened at Bradford to replace the existing Bradford and Shipley plants.

The biggest cut falls on Liverpool, where 1,450 are employed. News of yet another closure there is bound to lead to action by the unions to prevent the planned transfer of machinery from Liverpool to Lucas factories in the Birmingham area.

They are already in a ferment about the planned closure of

British Leyland's Speke plant, GEC's factory in the East Lancashire Road and the possible closure of Birds Eye's Kirby.

Mr Jack Cramer, a senior steward at Lucas Liverpool said: "This is another terrible blow for an area which is already facing a major employment problem."

"We shall be holding plant meetings tomorrow and will almost certainly ask our Birmingham colleagues not to accept the transfer of work from Liverpool."

Protests were made about the lack of consultation before the announcements to shop stewards at a series of regional and plant meetings with management.

Mr Brian Salisbury, deputy chairman of the Lucas Aerospace Combined Shop Stewards Committee, said: "We protested most vigorously about this blatant breach of the established procedure. We said we were only prepared to hear what they had to say and would then leave without comment to report to our members."

He said factory meetings would take place over the next two days to agree proposals to put before a full meeting of the combined shop stewards in Birmingham next Wednesday.

A statement issued later by the white-collar section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers' representatives on Lucas said: "The company refused to make any official comment, and cancelled a press conference which had been called for yesterday afternoon."

However, a document issued to stop stewards in the aerospace division's electrical factories said that apart from a relatively brief period in 1976, they had been unprofitable since they were formed by the amalgamation of three competing companies.

Mr Frank Vogl, Washington, March 16

The Carter Administration intends to strengthen its influence within the World Bank and other international financial institutions.

It is attempting to win support for tougher policies by these institutions toward countries that violate human rights, after opposition within the World Bank board last year by the United States executive director to planned loans totalling \$500m (about £263m) to nine countries.

At the same time the Administration is pressing for sharp reductions in the salaries and benefits of World Bank and International Monetary Fund employees.

It also plans to resist pressures to reduce its shareholding in these agencies, while pressing for increased aid contributions by the oil exporting countries.

These policies and aims are outlined in considerable detail in a special report prepared by the Treasury.

The proposals concerning salaries in particular will probably promote a furor within the IMF and the World Bank, as such matters have traditionally been handled confidentially by directors of these agencies.

The Treasury stresses that the Administration believes that the international institutions should be fully supported by the United States, that their economic and humanitarian achievements are substantial and that the United States can only maximize its influence within them by ensuring sustained financial contributions to them.

It also asserts that these institutions can directly contribute to strengthening American national security by reducing economic tensions and strengthening real growth in developing countries.

On this point the Treasury states that "the greatest threats to world peace now come from developing countries."

Foreign tax holds BP income rise to 10pc

By Christopher Wilkins

Despite a further squeeze on profitability in the final quarter of 1977, BP's income rose to £178.8m to £250.6m.

But the results caused considerable confusion in the City because of an additional extraordinary item of £54.2m, representing an overseas capital gains tax levy acting as a group reorganization in 1972; which left BP's net income only some 10 per cent up at £196.4m.

BP announced that it had changed its system of accounting for deferred tax to move into line with a new overseas capital gains tax law.

On this basis 1977 net income before the extraordinary item was £358.3m, up from an adjusted £338.1m in 1976.

The stock market's initial reaction was to lower the shares by 20p, but in later trading the price recovered to close unchanged at 746p.

BP's total sales were up from £10,581m to £11,997m, but its crude oil sales fell in volume from 79 million tonnes to 75.7 million tonnes.

Sales of other products were modestly higher, up from 96.2 to 99.7 million tonnes, but the group reported that its income from chemicals was sharply down, falling from £48.8m to £18.9m.

General trading faced increasingly difficult conditions due to the sharp decline in oil and the decline in prices, margins on shipping and refining, particularly in Europe, also remained depressed because of the continuing surplus of large tankers and distillation capacity.

However, income benefited from the building in crude oil production from the North Sea Forties field, and the group's stake in Sobho of the United States grew from 26 to 40 per cent as a result of the buildup of production from Alaska.

Sobho's contribution to the group's net income rose from £19.7m to £29.3m.

Commenting on the share of Sobho's investment, BP's capital spending totalled £795m, but this was well down on the peak £976m invested in 1976.

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Mr Carter aims to vet World Bank lending

From Frank Vogl, Washington, March 16

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It also plans to resist pressures to reduce its shareholding in these agencies, while pressing for increased aid contributions by the oil exporting countries.

These policies and aims are outlined in considerable detail in a special report prepared by the Treasury.

The proposals concerning salaries in particular will probably promote a furor within the IMF and the World Bank, as such matters have traditionally been handled confidentially by directors of these agencies.

The Treasury stresses that the Administration believes that the international institutions should be fully supported by the United States, that their economic and humanitarian achievements are substantial and that the United States can only maximize its influence within them by ensuring sustained financial contributions to them.

Community scales down growth prospects for this year

From Michael Hornsby, Brussels, March 16

Growth this year in the Community's gross national product could be as low as 2.8 per cent in real terms, according to the latest estimate released today by the European Commission.

This compares with previous forecasts of 3.3 to 3.5 per cent, and a target of 4 to 4.5 per cent, growth which Community finance ministers set themselves last November.

The Commission's gloomy assessment will be discussed by Mr Healey, the Chancellor, and his EEC colleagues in Brussels on Monday.

The hope is that this meeting could see the beginnings of an international effort, to be pursued at the two EEC summit meetings in Copenhagen in April and Bremen in July and at the subsequent western economic summit in Bonn, to revive the flagging world economy.

Some encouragement is drawn by Mr Jenkins, the President of the European Commission, both from the German-American rescue operation for the dollar and the general recognition that inflationary action by the strong "loc-

motive" German and Japanese economies will not by itself be enough.

The Commission estimates that on current trends British gnp growth this year could be 3.5 per cent, compared with no growth last year. This is higher than the growth rate forecast for any member state except Ireland, which is expected to achieve a rate of 6 per cent.

In its report this week, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) predicted that Britain's growth would be around 2.75 per cent. The difference is explained by the fact that the Commission gives more weight to the contribution of North Sea oil to the rate of growth.

Presenting the Commission's report on Monday, Mr Francois-Xavier Ortoli, the EEC Commissioner for Economic Affairs, will inform them that the expected growth rate last year of 2.4 per cent was only 1.9 to 2 per cent.

The Commission is slightly less pessimistic about employment. It estimates that the rate reached a peak of 5.7 per cent in the third quarter of last year, dropped to 5.5 per cent in January, and is likely to stabilize at around 5.6 per cent this year.

John Eagle writes in Rome: Signor Giulio Andreotti's new Italian Government will also at growth of 4.5 per cent in

1978 and inflation of not more than 13 per cent, a slight improvement on the 14.9 per cent rise in the 12 months ending in December.

To achieve these levels Signor Andreotti said, it was necessary to keep the public spending deficit down to 24,000,000m lire (about £15,000m), thus leaving not less than 16,000,000m lire of national credit available for the rest of the economy.

He did not go into details of how he proposes to reduce the public spending deficit to 24,000,000m lire from the widely accepted forecast that under present conditions it will exceed 30,000,000m lire.

Mr Carter aims to vet World Bank lending



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BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Missing the point on money supply?

were able to take the 1.1 per cent in sterling M3 in the banking month to February in their stride yesterday, with the authorities managing to see in a modest amount of sales at the end of last week and the start of this week-up day was on Wednesday—there was every reason for the market to feel unusually relaxed about the March money outlook to the figures coming out after the budget.

That may be missing the point though, now that the recent bulge in monetary growth appears to have been overcome, the market should really be giving serious thought to the appropriate monetary expansion from here on, in that the rate of rise in the general level has fallen so steeply, the money supply is now expanding fairly fast in real terms and there seems every reason to expect a monthly trend that annualizes at something like 13 per cent to be excessive, in this context, it must also be a matter of some potential concern that the recent growth of high monetary growth may be seen as the base for the Government's next monetary target.

What was the base for 1978 to be taken as the average of December, January and February, the Government would be able to take the gesture of dropping its ceiling on sterling M3 growth to 12 per cent and find that it could accommodate rather growth (in money terms) than if it met this year's 13 per cent target and continued with a 13 per cent ceiling in 1978-79.

Oil and the

back

1977 results are more than usually clouded by oddities in its tax charge. It is the threat of switching its treatment of oil tax, which makes the difference between a net income of £156.4m and £204.1m a new basis; it has paid United Kingdom corporation tax this time of £115m, compared to a credit of £76.2m in 1976-77. It has written off £54.2m as an extraordinary overseas capital gains tax charge, which caught the stock market on

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upturn yet—profits will be very much higher this year, probably in the £50m-£55m band. The historic price earnings multiple of 8 at 746p thus drops to 5 or less prospectively, and it would take a disastrous recession to prevent earnings rising further in 1979 and 1980. The yield is 4½ per cent.

Court Line

A lesson learned?

The Department of Trade Inspectors' report into Court Line says that it is insufficient for a company to produce profit figures which rely on disclosure of accounting treatment for a reader of the accounts to receive the statutory "true and fair view" required by the Companies Acts. This principle is central to any debate on accounting standards.

An average reader of accounts, the inspectors say, looks to the stated profit figures and places less reliance on the accompanying notes. In other words it is not disclosure, which is all important, but reasonably standard presentation.

This must be right. The inspectors conclude that the last accounts produced by Court Line, although arguably treating individual items correctly, did not add up to an overall true and fair view.

It is the directors, whose sole responsibility the accounts were who get the blame for this, with only minor criticism of the auditors, Robson Rhodes. In fact the section of the report which deals with accounting matters amounts to a practical description of most of the major controversies of accounting treatments over the past decade.

Everything from goodwill to currency translations appear for directors' interpretation. That the auditors' advice was often disregarded raises questions over the strength of auditors under British law. The new recommendation made by the inspectors that the concept of the "true and fair view" should apply equally to the directors' report as to the accounts themselves, seems eminently sensible.

Some problems over interpretation have since been solved by greater acceptance of accounting standards. But perhaps the most important standard which Court Line should have had—on leasing—has yet to be decided. On ultimately lessors of aircraft to Court Line were the largest creditors, yet most of this was off-balance sheet.

The whole process of decided on accounting standards and how to enforce them is currently under review; the lesson of Court Line and other cases is that they need to be both firm and enforceable.

Smith & Nephew

Return to growth

The point that Smith & Nephew had put the Gala Cosmetics debacle, which involved write-offs of £4.83m in 1975, behind it was well taken by the market some time ago, so the news that full year profits were 23.4 per cent ahead at £17.3m and that current profits were running 20 per cent ahead of last year merely confirmed that S&N is back on the steady growth track that characterized its pre-Gala record.

Its shares at 61p have now regained some of their premium rating. Assuming S&N is heading for profits of £20.5m this year, the prospective fully-taxed p/e ratio is 9.2, though the yield of 6 per cent is not out of the ordinary.

The most obvious scope now is the cosmetic business in the United States which, though slimmed down, still lost £600,000 last year. Further rationalization or closure seems inevitable this year, so there should be loss-elimination here.

Elsewhere plastics which saw 7 per cent sales growth last year and a 50 per cent profit growth should continue to do well. So should medical and health care, which accounts for 40 per cent of sales and 45 per cent of profit on the back of good export demand. On the evidence now, then, S&N's premium status seems justified.

As it is, private banks have

This month sees the tenth anniversary of British Leyland as a public company. It appears that Mr Eric Varley, the Secretary of State for Industry, is about to present Parliament with a U-turn in the financing and monitoring of this company.

On February 27, 1978, Mr Varley said: "I am not sure that the old formula which was used in April 1975, where everything was conditional upon a certain performance—was the best way of going about it. I do not think it is entirely realistic to suggest that."

In short, the House was told in 1975 that investment would be conditional on progress being made in Leyland's performance. Now we are told that this is not realistic. The old order changed!

Conservatives in 1975 made it quite clear that we were highly sceptical of the Government's "benchmark" approach. Investment in large-scale industry cannot be turned on and off like a tap—turning off when people strike and on again when they go back to work.

Yet Leyland was not a normal industry. It was an ailing giant which could not have attracted investment funds from the City. Only taxpayers' money could rescue it. Naturally, MPs felt a duty to watch over taxpayers' funds.

If the Government in 1975 did genuinely start out by hoping it could follow the benchmark approach it was soon blown off course by events. Unfortunately, the chairman of the National Enterprise Board and the author of the Leyland rescue plan were one and the same person—Lord Ryder.

During 1975 and 1976 Leyland met the conditions of the rescue plan. Productivity was stagnant and strikes just as frequent.

Lord Ryder, as chairman of the NEB, could hardly be expected to be tough on his own creation. So, in May, 1976, while admitting that performance had been disappointing in certain respects, the NEB still advised Mr Varley to approve the first £100m loan.

And on a day when the average rise was only 9 per cent and about 15 stocks saw rises of between 15 and 29 per cent, the frantic activity surrounding the Banque Financière de Paris et des Pays-Bas still managed to catch the eye.

The following day, after the communists and socialists signed the new agreement of intent, things quietened down, although the growing conviction in the market that the left now just cannot win has kept things buoyant at the Bourse all week.

The new agreement between the left and the right makes it quite clear why there should be so much activity and in particular so much surrounding one of the biggest private financial and banking companies in the country. A Bill to be presented during the first session of parliament promises nationalization if there is a government of the left and, if there is still no agreement about the range of industrial concerns involved, there is nevertheless an agreement as there has been all along—that the state should take over all control of credit.

Control of credit constitutes the cornerstone of the common programme as the partners of the left believe that this alone will enable them to bring about the social transformation which they have been promising the electorate.

As it is, private banks have

Setting a timetable for profitability at British Leyland

Altogether the group has now had £200m in loans, ostensibly for investment, since 1975, at least half of which has been used to pay wages.

All this, despite no tangible progress in producing more vehicles more efficiently

In fact, in the 1976 audit period the annual production was 784,800 vehicles—the lowest in the 10-year history of Leyland. Productivity in vehicles per man year was 4.28, as opposed to 4.41 in 1975. Hardly an encouraging picture—not much evidence there of monitoring or meeting benchmarks.

Again, in May, 1977, after the appalling toolmakers' strike, the Secretary of State for Industry told the House: "First, a complete return to normal working and to planned and agreed levels of output and productivity should be achieved quickly. If, as a result of lost production through industrial disputes, cash continues to flow out of the company at the present rate, the drastic review of the cars plan will have to take place at the latest during March, and the consequent cut back in major investment plans, and substantial unemployment, will become inevitable at that stage."

Yet, in July, 1977, the NEB told Mr Varley that further funds of up to £100m should be made available, subject to the NEB being satisfied that progress in industrial relations reform was maintained. At the same time the NEB monitoring was totally ineffective. It was recommending further money,

knowing that productivity was abysmal and that Leyland was on the way to "losing" 250,000 vehicles through industrial disputes.

The NEB also said that further money would be required before March 31, 1978.

Of this £100m so far only £50m has been drawn, in September 1977, to get over a cash flow problem. The House of Commons was then in recess, but a number of us reacted critically. Was not the £100m for investment? If progress had been good, why did Leyland need a £50m Hiebuoy two and a half years after the Ryder rescue?

Clearly, the benchmark formula was in disarray. Then, in January this year, Leyland needed a temporary short-term loan of £50m, negotiated surprisingly with commercial lenders. Whose guarantee was given for this?

Altogether, Leyland has now had £200m in loans, ostensibly for investment since 1975, at least half of which has been used to pay wages. All this, despite no tangible progress in producing more vehicles more efficiently.

This sad story pleases no one. In Parliament we all want a healthy viable British Leyland. Today there is a good leader in Mr Michael Edwards. He has made a promising start in re-

structuring the group. He has, however, yet to face his main challenge of productivity improvements and tough decisions to reduce over-manning.

If the benchmark formula is to go, can MPs abandon any hope of monitoring progress? A further £400m vote of confidence, now under contemplation, would take a lot of swallowing. As yet, we have no profit and loss figures for 1977, although they are unlikely to make encouraging reading.

While I am sure Mr Varley would like to give Mr Edwards his £400m, Conservative MPs will demand tangible evidence of improvements in performance over at least a six-month period, before approving a cash injection. I believe, too, that Parliament should set a timetable for a return to genuine profitability. Lord Ryder suggested 1982. Any further aid must be tied to achieving viability by this date and might well be written into a contract between the NEB and Leyland.

Real improvements must be made in quality control, in improving the number of vehicles per man year, and action taken over loss-making plants. Clear progress in these three areas will, at the same time, boost profits.

These, in turn, will enable Leyland to generate its own funds for investment. Once measurable progress can be seen over six months or so, an increase in capital could be the right move.

If that is proposed, the position of the 100,000 remaining private shareholders will need to be considered. In the Scheme of Arrangement, they "stayed in" Leyland, keeping 5 per cent of the shares. This was sealed in the High Court.

It could be claimed that since the Prime Minister's 1975 statement, is enshrined in the Scheme, a change from that policy to "no strings" finance would be a breach. It might be fairer to make the 100,000 shareholders an offer for their shares.

There may be a real disadvantage to Mr Edwards in a £400m hand-out. He has to instil into his works managers the need to manage. If there is £400m "in the kitty" it may be difficult for them to establish firm control over their workforce.

Our need to see tangible results is more likely to lead Leyland back to the disciplines of the market place. When that happens—as it must—Mr Edwards can raise genuine capital and loans in the City. That is his wish and I am sure he is right.

The author is member of Parliament for Surrey, North West, and vice-chairman of the Conservative Industry Committee.

Future of French banking in the balance

Ian Murray

Pandemonium broke out on the Paris Bourse on Monday morning when it became clear that the left had failed to secure sufficiently in the first round of the elections to be sure of winning in the second. Shares changed hands so quickly that it became impossible to fix rates for them immediately.

And on a day when the average rise was only 9 per cent and about 15 stocks saw rises of between 15 and 29 per cent, the frantic activity surrounding the Banque Financière de Paris et des Pays-Bas still managed to catch the eye.

The following day, after the communists and socialists signed the new agreement of intent, things quietened down, although the growing conviction in the market that the left now just cannot win has kept things buoyant at the Bourse all week.

The new agreement between the left and the right makes it quite clear why there should be so much activity and in particular so much surrounding one of the biggest private financial and banking companies in the country. A Bill to be presented during the first session of parliament promises nationalization if there is a government of the left and, if there is still no agreement about the range of industrial concerns involved, there is nevertheless an agreement as there has been all along—that the state should take over all control of credit.

Control of credit constitutes the cornerstone of the common programme as the partners of the left believe that this alone will enable them to bring about the social transformation which they have been promising the electorate.

As it is, private banks have

only 20 per cent of the total funds on deposit in France. The remaining 80 per cent is divided equally between the big four nationalized banks and the trustee and savings banks—the huge Caisse Agricole, which is the third largest bank in the world.

Because the left sees these essentially friendly society banks as being based on the very sort of mutualism they advocate, there is no intention of bringing them under state control, although the likelihood is that provision would be made to ensure customer and worker representation on their management boards.

So the plans for the banking sector are confined to the big private banks and finance houses, some 700 establishments in all, many of them inter-linked or subsidiaries of one or other of the half a dozen or so really big concerns.

In France the concept of nationalization was devised by the trade unions immediately after the First World War, but it made headway only when it was taken up by the Resistance Movement during the Second World War. With the Liberation popular feeling was widely in favour of it and General de Gaulle had little trouble passing a range of nationalization Bills through the immediate postwar parliament.

Banks were among the prime targets for nationalization, since popular feeling was all for knocking over "the wall of money" which had been denounced before the war by President Edouard Herriot. The Bank of France was taken over completely by the state and the shares of the four other major banks—two of which have since merged—were also acquired.

The state has since put 25 per cent of their shares on the

open market, but is still very much in control of them even though they are run as commercial concerns.

When the nationalization Bill was taken through Parliament just before Christmas, 1945, there were only one or two areas of disagreement—one of them centred on the Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas. The finance commission wanted to include it but M. Plevin, the Minister, argued that it was essential for the recovery of the country that business banks like it should not pass out of private hands.

He was twice defeated by the commission and it took the intervention of General de Gaulle in the debate to secure its exclusion.

M. Plevin's arguments of 1945 are identical to those of M. Barre in 1978. The government believes that it is essential to maintain a mixed banking network if the strength of the franc is to be maintained and foreign investors are to have confidence in the economy.

should it come to power. At the same time, this will present inevitable and acceptable to a left government—redundancies.

If the left wins, then nationalization is inevitable to allow the structural changes necessary to implement the common programme while maintaining the economic balance. Some economists on the left are apprehensive about what will happen if nationalization takes place, but, politically, it is something to which the left is totally committed.

If the governments hang on to power, as is likely, then there will certainly be no talk of nationalization. However, the fact that the left so nearly won will give President Giscard d'Estaing a powerful argument to adopt policies more in line with socialist thinking.

Private business banks would be kept very much in business to prove to the world that the French economy is not under state control. Nevertheless, it could well be that thought will be given to ways of curbing the growth of their empires, which the left point to as the unacceptable face of capitalism.

Business Diary: Paperback righter • Ace in space

for a new novel by the writer Thomas Giff, *The Man from Lisbon* (Hammond, £4.95), that the security Waterlows were in the aftermath of the 1920s, a Portuguese called Alves Reis Waterlows to print the book. What was about the fraud was not notes were not in the commonly accepted sense of the word, in so far as they were the correct paper.

It is special about the novel, is that Waterlows, very much, with us years on, is a subsidiary of British Printing Corporation.

thought reports of the death were greatly exaggerated and were by an invitation to the launching of the book.

As living proof of the point, the corporation presented yesterday by Waterlows (London), the paperback righter, book are assigned to BPC subsidiary, Futura.

220s episode ended on a happy note. Waterlows, then head was Sir Waterlows, a former

York of London, had to £700,000 in damages

American insurance

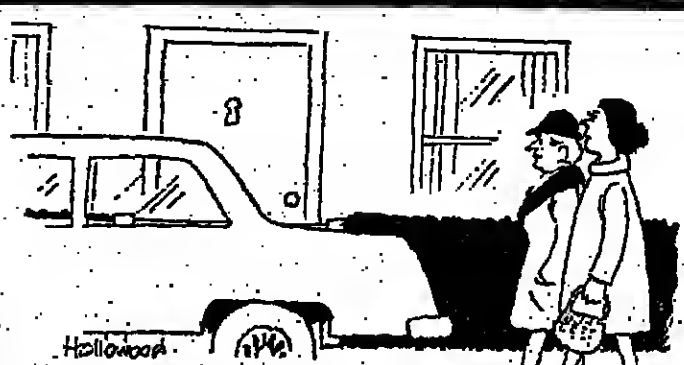
Marsh & McLellan, the biggest, and their

altercations, T. B. Brown, the day while the

of a space shuttle will

£50m.

But the ace the brokers have been playing in London is the shuttle. This offers theoretical 100 per cent reliability—with a need for payed cover of up to £100m compared with the present limit on space shots of £50m.



"They're very nouveau riche—wacking great redundancy payments for three members of the family."

ring the Lutine Bell at Lloyd's.

Philip Smith, M. & M's senior vice-president, is here promoting the idea of space insurance now that more and more European launches are planned in the next decade and the day of the space shuttle draws nearer.

Backed by George Baker from the American National Aeronautics and Space Administration and Dr Tim Howell from the European Space Agency, Smith has been persuading the London insurance community of the importance of extra-terrestrial cover.

Over the past 13 years premium income from this source has risen to £43m (about £23.6m) with the London market leading the way. Unfortunately, most of this was wiped out by the 52m failure of a European satellite last year.

But the ace the brokers have been playing in London is the shuttle. This offers theoretical 100 per cent reliability—with a need for payed cover of up to £100m compared with the present limit on space shots of £50m.

We have received an undated letter from a source who is not a member of the London market. It proclaims as a "major triumph" the fact that the Interpreter Super Maxomatic Mk III Combined Heater/Thermometer (possibly something to do with fish tanks) has been approved by the "very stringent" electrical testing authorities in Queensland. The reader wishing to find out more is asked to write to the "very stringent" Woolloongabba, Queensland, but we didn't have the time.

The London School of Economics and Imperial College, London, are putting a toe into a potentially promising academic backwater, that of business history.

One immediately discernible area of promise is the funds available for British industrial and commercial companies have already put over £200,000 towards setting up a unit with a director of professional status (the job is now being advertised). Foundations, both here and abroad are being asked for more.

Among the research themes being canvassed are the development of modern management in Britain (possibly a very brief study) and the reasons for business failure (possibly a rather longer inquiry).

The unit's financial affairs will be in the hands of a committee chaired by Professor Ralf Dahrendorf, the Director of the LSE, and academic matters in the hands of yet another committee under Theo Barker, Professor of Economic History at LSE.

Barker wrote *The Glassmakers* (Penguin 1962-76). The unit's appeal for funds is sponsored by Sir Alastair Pilkington, chairman of glass-makers Pilkington Brothers.

Perennial rumours that Anglo American Corporation of South Africa, or its United Kingdom arm, Charter Consolidated, will make a bid for Selection Trust (Charter has more than 30 per cent) were revived yesterday with the announcement that Chester Beatty is to retire as chairman and from the board of Selection.

City legend has it that there is a gentleman's agreement between Harry Oppenheimer, chairman of Anglo and Beatty, whose father founded the company, that there will be no takeover while Beatty is in harness. However, the rumour is unlikely to be proved true, at least for the time being, since apart from anything else Beatty, who is 70, is to retain links with the company by becoming president.

The successor as chairman is John Du Cane, 56, who will retain his posts of chief executive and managing director. It is very largely the Beatty-Du Cane axis that has been responsible over the last 10 years or so for developing Selection away from a mining finance house living on investments to one developing its own projects.

A correspondent assures us that in discussing a schools investment game organized by a bank a pupil from a Northern Ireland school said: "We made a bomb when Glenlivet was taken over by a United States firm."



John Du Cane

Sime Darby Holdings Limited
INTERIM RESULTS
FOR THE SIX MONTHS ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1977

- Interim Dividend up from 11% to 20%
- Directors propose one-for-one Bonus Issue.
- Half-year consolidated results improve. Turnover up 15% Profit attributable up 10%
- Principal subsidiaries improve results in first half.
- Directors foresee the profit growth continuing.

	Six months to 31st December 1977	Six months to 31st December 1976	Year to 30th June 1977
	MS million	MS million	MS million
TURNOVER	708.59	615.60	1,267.93
PROFIT BEFORE TAXATION	81.36	74.26	151.43
PROFIT BEFORE EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS	28.67	26.00	55.54
EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS	.01	.04	39.94
PROFIT ATTRIBUTABLE TO SIME DARBY HOLDINGS LIMITED	28.66	26.04	95.48
	Interim	Interim	Total

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Stock markets

Prices steady as buyers hold off

A lack of selling helped shares to keep their poise in spite of mildly disappointing figures from BP and a warning on future profits from BAT Industries.

Though the market has been particularly sensitive to this sort of company news in recent weeks it did not react yesterday and the FT Index closed 4.4 up at 458.3, its best level of the day. Money supply figures just about matched up to most hopes.

The lack of interest either way was shown up by a total of 100 shares which fell below 5000 to the first time in a week. Most dealers felt at the outset that shares were in for a second day of losses. Their explanation of the subsequent rather surprising firmness was that the institutions with their comparatively healthy cash positions are in no mood to sell at present.

The shares in A. A. Jones & Shipman, the machine tool group, are notably firm at 110p ahead of weekly figures which could show profits up from £1.7m to £2.4m. Such a gain would indicate the benefit to margins of rising output. In the main factory it is thought that one third of the labour force at the Leicester factory own shares in the group.

The underlying strength of the gilt market helped Government stocks weather the money supply figures. Both long and short dipped after the announcement of the 14.1 per cent growth but regained their position on an absence of sellers.

At the shorter end dealers were kept fairly busy moving out the day with stocks moving up and down within an eighth of their previous overnight level before closing around a sixteenth up on the session. The Government Broker again activated the short "tap" and is thought to have sold a small amount of £96 13/16 before finishing at that level.

In active trading, though light turnover, longs ended about an eighth down.

In a firm stores sector some investment buying put a couple of pence on Marks & Spencer at 147p, GUS "A" at 285p. Boots at 204p and House of Fraser at 134p. The sector generally tended to edge better on hopes that the promised tax cuts in the Budget will boost consumer spending. Other groups to gain ground yesterday included Woolworth at 65p, Debenhams at 100p and Sears at 60p. In front of their fig-

ures W. H. Smith added a penny to 152p.

Good interim results and the forecast of another record year was enough to nudge Waring & Gilbey 6p better to 86p in small but aggressive trading.

There was something of a false start in BP when the figure were announced. Because extraordinary items were not immediately apparent the shares were initially marked down to 720p. But second thoughts quickly put the situation right and the shares went back to around their overnight level and closed at an unchanged 746p. Trading was not heavy though a good demand was reported on Wood Street.

Other oil shares fell in sympathy and though most rallied Shell closed 6p off at 500p. A firm spot was to be found in Oil Exploration which closed 10p higher at 214p after news of Phillips Petroleum's discovery had put an end to the long-running dry well talk.

To Motors Lucas Industries discounted news of the Liverpool closures to move 4p ahead at one stage and to close 2p up at 264p. Hoping for more news on the takeover front Ford dealers W. J. Reynolds gained 2p to 39p while British Leyland, where the comment has been a little kinder of late, were 2p up at 25p at one stage. But Renault, one of its main rivals, slipped a penny to 119p after this week's meeting.

After the chairman's comment at the annual meeting that profits this year would only be maintained with difficulty, both the BATs issued a few pence. But they subsequently fell to unchanged positions with the Industries at 305p and the Preferred at 265p. But a brighter picture emerged from the Rank meeting where the

forecast of a higher return this year lifted the shares 4p for a close of 248p.

In light trading the shipping sector was little changed. British & Commonwealth added 2p to 267p while Furness Withy at 255p, European Ferries at 112p, P & O Dtd at 37p held steady on the day. LOFS went a penny down to 301p.

In front of full-year figures due on Monday Booker McConnell has been attracting good support this week, rising 16p to 223p last night. The market is impressed with the reorganization after the loss of the Guyana sugar assets and is now looking for profits of up to £24m, against £15m. The expanded wholesale food should be a strong contributor, and a quicker than expected turnaround in engineering is on the cards.

Saga Holidays, due in the market soon, was reported to be heavily oversubscribed when lists opened yesterday.

Gold shares tended easier again as the bullion price drifted down but dealers report that there are buyers around. Among those to lose ground were Free State gold at £16 5/32, President Brand at £10, President Steyn at £7, and Western Rand Consolidated down 13p to 104p. Harmony at 364p, Libanon at 520p and Kloof at 453p also fell back while Consolidated Goldfields slipped 4p to 178p.

De Beers did lose 9p to 328p but market men feel there is likely to be little trade today as the shares go ex-dividend in New York but remain cum-dividend in London, South Africa and on the continent. At 145p Ever Ready was firm in a further response to the

partial price increases granted for later in the year.

Speculative interest in J. Jarvis lifted the shares several pence to 166p at one stage while Stewart Plastics traded between extremes of 30p and 143p before settling at 140p a gain of 1p. Also favoured was J. & J. Hyman which ended 5p up to 37p.

In drinks Arthur Bell attracted more support on the strength of its figures and rose another 6p to 224p, but the lack of follow-through speculative demand left Highland Distillers 2p off at 142p. The pick of the "blue chips" was Glaxo which rose 7p to 527p, and Beecham where the rise was 10p to 620p. News that Reed International's negotiations to sell its South African interests had proved abortive had the shares jumping about in late trading and after hours. Though they were unchanged at the official close they fell swiftly after hours until they reached 111p, a net loss on the day of 6p.

A recent firm spot in the shipping sector is Ocean Transport which has held steady at 129p for the past week. With figures due at the beginning of April, Ocean is the first of the major shipping groups to report, and the market is looking for around £44m-£45m against a previous £41m. Assuming a maximum dividend, the shares should yield a prospective 9.5 per cent.

Equity turnover on March 15 was £71.2m (14,966 bargains). Active stocks yesterday, according to Exchange Telegraph, were BP, Shell, BAT Ind, GEC, ICI, Burmah, Beecham, Dunlop, Distillers, Coats Paton, Fisons, Grand Metropolitan, Marks & Spencer and Tate & Lyle.

Latest results

Company	Sales	Profits	Earnings	Div	Pay	Year's
for or Fin	£m	£m	per share	pence	date	total
BP (F)	1,471,011,286.0	304,133,811	92.6 (87.4)	15.12 (12.91)	12/5	22,101,998
Richard Clay (F)	3,571,431	1,271,141	10.92 (7.84)	1.86 (1.83)	12/5	11,212
Wm Collins (F)	53,751,493	3,141,222	16.1 (28.7)	2.55 (2.55)	5/5	4,614,111
De Montfort (I)	(—)	(—)	(—)	(—)	(—)	(—)
Falcon Mines	(—)	(—)	(—)	(—)	(—)	(—)
Globe Dudley (F)	31,751,36.54	4,531,31	21.6 (19.29)	2.51 (2.51)	11/5	2,521,234
HTV Grp (I)	14,781,939	1,811,191	8.27 (5.25)	1.83 (1.54)	12/5	(—)
Johnson Gp (F)	20,217,001	2,041,150	14.43 (11.50)	3.0 (2.5)	12/5	(—)
Min Marriers (I)	3,321,237	0,01 (0.12)	(—)	2.42 (1.41)	15/4	3,891,348
Min Marriers (I)	3,321,237	0,01 (0.12)	(—)	2.30 (2.5)	12/5	(—)
Pirelli Cable (F)	8,818,69.65	0,991,951	11.31 (11.3)	2.84 (2.36)	(—)	(—)
Sharpe & Fehr (F)	15,281,13.79	8,031,482	(—)	(—)	(—)	(—)
Shire Darby (I)	708,591,63.60	28,661,26.04	(—)	1.67 (1.42)	26/5	2,371,212
Sime Dby (I)	46,791,37.68	0,01 (0.09)	(—)	208 (116)	31/5	(—)
S. C. Small (F)	5,721,3.53	0,07 (0.09)	3.44 (4.12)	1.01 (1.0)	5/6	2,012,010
Sm & Nephw (F)	163,181,145.47	17,351,14.04	5.75 (—)	1.61 (1.44)	(—)	2,431,211
Geo Spencer (F)	12,541,10.50	0,53 (0.26)	5.0 (2.2)	1.71 (1.49)	2/5	2,461,212
Waring & Gilw (I)	20,181,17.11	1,431,1.03	(—)	1.00 (0.95)	9/5	(—)
James Wilkes (F)	7,681,6.67	0,47 (0.53)	7.2 (2.3)	2.36 (2.06)	31/5	3,751,312
Wolseley-Bis (I)	62,721,46.06	4,461,0.09	(—)	3.32 (3.02)	4/7	(—)

Dividends in this table are shown net of tax on pence per share. Elsewhere in Business News dividends are shown on a gross basis. To establish gross multiply the net pre-tax and earnings are net. A Kingfish. B In per cent. C Loss.

Reshaping proposals for Botswana subsidiary

By Desmond Quigley

Botswana RST, the ill-fated nickel/copper project, has announced the long-awaited restructuring of its 85 per cent owned subsidiary BCL. But neither the restructuring nor the heavy losses made last year will provide the bonanza some speculators had hoped for.

Botswana made an attributable loss of Pula 38.5m (about £24.3m) in the year to the end of last December, taking the accumulated loss to P12.5m (about £64.7m) from P64m. Despite the crisis in the nickel industry, BCL is to stay in operation and will even aim to maintain the record rate of output of the second six months of 19307 tonnes of mate.

BRST does not anticipate any significant increase in nickel or copper prices this year and states that without such increases BCL is forecast to incur "substantial" operating losses throughout the year and will be unable to repay its indebtedness and as a result BRST will be unable to pay any dividends for the "foreseeable future".

The complex restructuring proposals will result in the principal shareholders—Amaz and Anglo American Corporation of South Africa/Charter Consolidated axis now just short of 60 per cent—having to put up a further P51.8m on top of the commitment—estimated at a cost of P21.6m—to further capital projects.

Redfearn Glass report delay

The Monopolies Commission has been allowed more time to prepare its report on the Redfearn National Glass takeover attempt from Rockware Group and United Glass.

The report was originally intended to go to Mr Roy Hattersley, Secretary of State for Prices and Consumer Protection, next Tuesday but now the date has been put back to April 15.

The decision was made "following representation from the commission that there are special reasons why the reports cannot be made by March 21."

Last month Rheem International, the United States company which started the bidding, pulled out of the battle as it thought success was unlikely. By law the Secretary of State can allow an extension of not more than three months on any one reference.

Confident IMI is well placed for growth

By Tony May

On the outlook for its first year as an independent company Sir Michael Clapham is confident that Imperial Metal Industries is well placed to increase both turnover and profits "significantly", given a climate favourable to industry.

Stressing that the group, which used to be controlled by ICI, is now completely independent, Sir Michael says that no one of some 76,000 shareholders controls as much as 3 per cent of the issued shares. Analysis of the reconstructed share register shows that about 55 per cent of the equity is held by institutions, who between them represent thousands of small savers and investors.

The other 44 per cent is held by individuals including IMI employees and pensioners. As one of the country's top 100 industrial concerns—with about 27,000 employees in the United Kingdom and 6,000 overseas—and with its very wide spread of institutional and private shareholders "we see it as our duty to aim for security, for a steady growth of income and not least for adding to the assets of the company for new investment", Sir Michael adds.

The directors will propose at the annual meeting a change of name to plain IMI.



Sir Michael Clapham

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Drummond Assurance rescue plan

By Margaret Stone

A rescue operation for Drummond Assurance, the friendly society which was ordered to stop taking on new business last week, is likely to be mounted by the Family Assurance Society, Leeds, with members of 2,000 and assets of about £150,000, is expected to propose the reorganisation of Drummond should be transferred to it.

Mr Robert Morrison, of Planned Services Life Assurance, Leeds, chairman, indicated yesterday that the proposed transfer was a "goodwill" gesture which will ensure the management of the policies of the 180 members of Drummond, which has assets of some £16,500. No new policies will be issued under the Drummond umbrella.

Drummond was ordered to stop taking on new business because the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies was concerned about the group's operating expenses and also its connections with Drummond Investors, which may be wound up. The funds are secure but members would have had to have borne increasingly heavy administration costs.

Associated Fisheries may have hit bottom

Shareholders in Associated Fisheries who attended yesterday's annual meeting may have heard the worst that will befall their group. Mr Paul Tapscott, chairman, told them that he was "extremely conscious of the heavy losses sustained in the opening months of the new year."

Interests outside fish are being built up, but he added, "the impact is unlikely to be sufficient to prevent an overall group loss for the first six months' trading." However, the chairman hopes to remark in July with the interim bulletin that the worst is past.

That, for what it is worth, is the good news from a group faced with the destruction of the British fishing industry. Its

Saga offer for sale heavily over-subscribed

By Bryan Appleyard

The offer for sale of 35 per cent of the equity of Saga Holidays was oversubscribed twelve times.

County Bank received applications for 25.5 million shares compared with the 21.1 million shares on offer.

The shares are to be allocated as follows: a weighted ballot for applications up to 300 shares, with successful applicants receiving 200 shares, applications for more than 1,000 shares will receive about 75 per cent of the number applied for with a minimum of 200 shares. Letters of acceptance or regret are to be sent on Tuesday and dealings will start on Wednesday. Jobbers Akroyd and Smithers and Smith Bros, will be dealing in the stock.

Saga is the first new company to come to the market this year. It specializes in off-season exclusive holidays for elderly people. The offer at 105p per share valued the company at more than £6m.

Hanover and BTI Euro contrast

By Christopher Wilkins

The divergent trend in the profitability of banks specializing in the Eurocurrency markets has been further underlined by results from two London merchant banking subsidiaries of big American commercial banks, Manufacturers Hanover Limited and Bankers Trust International.

Despite the squeeze on the dollar, which has depressed profits in sterling terms, MHI achieved 10 per cent growth to top the £5m mark. Having held out for some time against the downward pressure on interest rate margins, the bank's management of syndicated loans was down from \$9,400m to \$8,200m, but it considerably increased its activity in the bond markets, being involved in 37 issues compared with 29 in 1976.

The balance sheet increased in size from £116m to £134m, but this was largely explained by a rise in year end trading positions, up from £18.1m to £39.3m, chiefly comprising CDs.

Fee income from underwriting and trading accounted for some 50 per cent of profit. MHI's profits, reported down from £1.35m to £1.24m, and the fall would have been much bigger but for a £500,000 clawback of an earlier loan loss provision. The bank's business emphasis has been changing as the balance sheet contracted from £95.6m to £80.9m.

East Drie attack on SA tax

By Our Financial Staff

A sharp attack on the "highly discriminatory" and "generalizing" effect of existing South African taxation on successful gold mines has been made by Mr R. A. Plumbridge, chairman of East Driefontein.

Last year, for the first time, the whole of the mine's profit was subject to taxation and the State's share of profit, which, in aggregate, amounted to R83.3m, on a pre-tax profit of R155.9m, or 53 per cent. In addition there was a R9.1m compulsory loan levy.

In his annual report, Mr Plumbridge comments: "The fact that members who put all the capital and took all the risks in the establishment of the mine, received as their reward only one third of the distributable profit for the year, while the State took the rest, plus a large loan levy, clearly demonstrated the penalizing effect that the existing tax legislation has on successful gold mines such as East Driefontein."

The industry is hoping to raise the matter with the authorities and to seek the same taxation method as applies to the base metal industry, at least. Last year East Driefontein made pre-tax profits of R155.9m compared with R157.3m but paid out dividends of only 76 cents a share compared with 75 cents a share the previous year.

Allied Insulators win Blakey's acceptance

Blakey's (Malleable Castings) has recommended acceptance of the offer by Allied Insulators for the remainder of the equity of Blakey. The terms are 52p cash or seven Blakey shares for every six Allied.

The move follows the purchase by Allied of 1.9 million Blakey shares, also at 52p each, from Centraway Securities. Centraway has agreed, in the context of the takeover, to withdraw its offer of 48p cash.

Centraway's stake was 50.59 per cent.

MILN MARSTERS GROUP For figures see table. Board foresees satisfactory year but last year's peak may not be reached.

SHARPE AND FISHER Figures, see table. A 11 per cent rise in year end trading positions, up from £18.1m to £39.3m, chiefly comprising CDs.

ROTAFLEX (GREAT BRITAIN) In annual statement chairman says "pressure on overseas margins... But company poised to exploit economic upturn when it occurs."

CHARTER CONSOLIDATED Charter Bankers Ltd bought Charter's 40 per cent in Australian Merchant Bank. International Pacific Corp. No financial details.

CONS-GOLD-AUSTRALIA To sell 60.17 per cent stake in Commonwealth Mining Investments (Australia) to National Mutual Life Association of Australia.

Briefly

lasts at \$2.45 a share. Sale worth \$8.3m.

TILLING-LINER Thomas Tilling has received acceptances totalling 92.45 per cent in respect of offer for Liner Company.

BROAD ST HOUSE Tradefair House Developments has let 23,000 square feet on first, second and third floors of its new office development at Broad St House, in Bank of Scotland.

C. S. HEATE Group has bought freehold property known as Shipping Federation House for about £3.6m.

DATA RECALL Pre-tax profits for 1977 £123,000 (£41,000). Turnover £512,000 (£387,000).

AFRICAN LAKES AGM has been changed to May 18, as a result of change, dividend payment of 4.4p will now be May 19, not May 4.

BEA ACQUISITION Scheme of arrangement to effect acquisition of BEA not already owned has been approved.

ANGLO AM IND Pre-tax profit for 1977 \$66.4m (\$55.1m). Earnings a share 151.7 (160). Dividends \$0.50.

NORFOLK CAPITAL First quarter saw improvement in hotels division and bigger property rentals. Mr Maxwell, chairman, told annual meeting.

General Vacancies

also on pages 12 and 13

PIGMENT PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Foreign-based company seeks for its Swiss headquarters a highly qualified

Chemist, Physicist or Process Engineer

with several years' experience in the area of pigment manufacture and development, who will be responsible for developing and introducing new production processes.

Essential qualifications for the position are a graduate degree in chemistry, physics or process engineering and a good knowledge of the field of pigment conditioning. The candidate must also be prepared to show an above-average standard of work. Knowledge of German and French would also be an asset.

This position offers scope for advancement. Interested candidates are invited to apply with full particulars to Box No. TT 56, 8 rue Halévy, 75441 PARIS CEDEX 09, France.

BOOK PUBLISHING

Octopus Books, located in Mayfair, is continuing the expansion of its international publishing programme. We require energetic, experienced and where appropriate qualified staff to work on a wide range of highly illustrated general books.

The vacancies are for: EDITORS, PICTURE RESEARCHERS & DESIGNERS.

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FINANCIAL NEWS

Insurance on R R International Rank trading on target

Financial Staff at the Rank Organisation, running close to the estimates and Mr Harry Rank, chairman, confirmed the annual meeting that a review of the outlook statement to shareholders referred to the being made to improve the company's financial position for the year 1978. The review of the outlook statement to shareholders referred to the being made to improve the company's financial position for the year 1978. The review of the outlook statement to shareholders referred to the being made to improve the company's financial position for the year 1978.

Record year forecast Waring & Gillow

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Good first quarter is on the way at Alcan

Mr Nathaniel V. Davis, chairman of Alcan Aluminium, told shareholders at the company's fifth annual meeting in Montreal that Alcan should show improved first quarter figures when the results are available in the latter half of next month. This is based on Alcan's January figures, combined with an up-to-date appraisal of the company's likely level of sales.

He indicated that the aluminium industry should continue to grow during the coming decade. "We have confidence that future growth lies ahead, but we believe the rate of growth is not likely to be as robust as the historical rate," said Mr Davis. He forecasts an average 5 per cent annual growth rate in primary aluminium consumption during the next decade compared with a compound 8 per cent growth rate over the past half century.

Three main factors account for the lower growth expectations for primary aluminium; slower economic growth in the major industrialised countries, the expectation that economic growth in the lesser developed countries may not pick up rapidly in the near term, and the progress being made in recycling which would have some impact on the demand for primary metal.

Currency rates threaten profits levels at B A T Industries

By Michael Clark

A warning of a possible profits setback was given to shareholders by Mr Peter Macadam, chairman of B A T Industries, at the annual meeting. He said that it would be difficult to maintain last year's profit level. The news was a depressing factor in the market. At the present time, with five months of the current year gone and exchange rates at their current levels, he believes that the maintenance of last year's level of profit attributable to B A T Industries shareholders is as much as the group can expect. Even this will only be achieved with some difficulty.

Nevertheless, looking beyond the immediate future, the underlying growth prospects of the business, he affirmed, remained strong.

Last year pre-tax profits of B A T increased by 11 per cent to £416m on sales 10 per cent ahead at £6,210m.

Mr Macadam expects all four divisions to maintain or increase their profits before tax, but to turn also expects the proportion of group taxation overall to rise from last year's lower than usual level.

In the tobacco division volume continues to increase, and in local currency terms pre-tax profit overall is expected to increase. In the US there are indications that the steps taken by Brown & Williamson are beginning to stem the decline in market share but the operating expenditure vital to success is having its effect on profit.

In the retail division the High Street battle in this country is eroding profit but in the US Gimbel's & Saks had a good last quarter in 1977 and the group looks forward to better results for the year overall.

Meanwhile, the slight slowing down in the paper division in the second half last year has been halted while in the cosmetics division profit is returning to its upward trend.

Mr Peter Macadam, chairman of B A T Industries.

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H. Wigfall once again spurns bid from Comet

By Tony May

Unmoved by the higher terms from Comet Radiovision, the board of Henry Wigfall is adamant that the bid, which values the group at about £142 is opportunistic and unacceptable. Wigfall says that it totally ignores the underlying value and strength of the television realty business.

The continuing and increasing stream of income and cash flow from these rental contracts is one of the keys to future profits at Wigfall. As these contracts may be bought and sold like all other assets, the board has estimated the current market value of the sets and other equipment on rental. It amounts to over £25m.

Holders of 45 per cent of the equity have already come out against the Comet offer and the board says that rather than take a short-term gain they are looking instead towards the longer-term prospects of Wigfall. Steps taken by the board are expected to enhance the profit potential.

In pointing out the disadvantages of accepting the offer, the Wigfall board notes that the high cash component of the bid could make accepting shareholders liable to capital gains tax, and claims that even on the increased terms a reduction of 20 per cent would be suffered on the income from a shareholders investment.



Mr Peter Macadam, chairman of B A T Industries.

Big gains to come on Paris Bourse

The Paris Bourse has room to make further substantial gains despite advancing 9 per cent on Monday and 4 per cent yesterday, stockbrokers' analysts said in Paris.

Most of them consider that market fundamentals have changed, and not only because of the present political considerations.

Fears that French political and economic structures would be changed after a Left Wing election victory have been allayed. Generally the market is confident that the ruling coalition will remain in power after the second round of the parliamentary elections on Sunday.

There is a growing feeling also that the country's economy is much healthier than a few months ago and that inflationary pressures are abating.

A number of technical features also seem likely to support the market at least until about May.

It is also believed that with the New York Stock Exchange depressed, German and Japanese markets dull because of appreciating currencies, and London looking unpromising for capital gains, Paris will have considerable attractions after the elections.

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Ericsson rings up £63m

L. M. Ericsson, the Swedish electronics manufacturer, reports profits for 1977 up 71 per cent at £53m (€62.7m) before tax and special adjustments. Sales were up 36 per cent at £7,830m (€9,800m).

Sales outside Sweden again accounted for 84 per cent of the total. Ericsson is a world leader in telephone, especially exchange, technology. Its AXE electronic exchanges helped the consortium of which Ericsson was a member to win the giant Saudi Arabian telephone contract last December.

The group's strength in London is its basic commercial banking business which it continuously improves and develops. The bank looks forward in 1978 to developing its leasing services to its clients and also to involvement in export finance.

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What B.A.T Industries did in 1977...

Increased turnover to £6,212 million, raised pre-tax profits by 11%, manufactured in 78 countries, employed 250,000 people and contributed a net £142 million to Britain's balance of payments.

Tobacco Division

The Division is the free world's largest manufacturer of tobacco products with a turnover of £4,104 million and £348 million operating profit in 1977. The subsidiary and affiliated companies operate 118 tobacco factories in 51 different countries. Exports from the USA include Kent, Kool, Lucky Strike, Pall Mall and Viceroy; and brands exported from the UK include well-known house names such as Benson & Hedges, John Player, State Express and Wills. A B A T cigarette is the brand leader in 33 countries.

Paper Division

In 1977 the Paper Division's turnover totalled £552 million and operating profits were £53 million. The principal interest is Wiggins Teape, which makes a variety of industrial papers and an extensive range of specialty papers such as Idem carbonless copying paper, as well as high grade printing and writing papers. The company has 18 mills and factories in the UK, and 5 more in Belgium, France and Eire. Outside Europe, there are mills in Brazil and India, 5 factories in Africa, and a 25% interest in Associated Pulp and Paper Mills in Australia. The Division also has a 50% interest in Mardon Packaging International, Britain's second largest packaging company, with 100 factories - mainly in the UK, France, Germany, Canada and the USA.

Retail Division

In the USA, the Group's interests comprise Gimbel Brothers with 38 department stores, Saks Fifth Avenue with 31 high fashion stores and The Kohl Corporation with 96 stores, mostly supermarkets. In Brazil, Supermercados Pao-Pao is a supermarket chain of 38 stores. In Britain, International Stores operates 730 supermarkets and self-service stores, and the Division also owns Kearsley & Tonge the grocery wholesalers. Other retail interests include trade investments in Canada and Denmark and a 25% interest in the Herten chain of 58 department stores in West Germany. Retailing turnover in 1977 was £1,391 million and operating profits were £24 million.

Cosmetics Division

The Division comprises the Houses of Yardley, Lenthéric, Marny, Cyclax, Juvens, Germaine Monteil, Scandia and Tyroché. Their perfumery, cosmetics, toiletries, soaps and skin care products are sold in 143 countries and manufactured in 33. The principal establishments are in the UK, USA, Canada, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, South Africa, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand. Turnover and operating profits were £105 million and £3 million respectively in 1977.

...and how

particular, Wiggins Teape, the principal part of the Division, increased its operating profit by 62%.

The Cosmetics business continued to expand its sales, though not its profit, which experienced a fall from £5 million to £3 million. This is a fiercely competitive business. I am pleased to be able to report that profit is returning to its previous pattern of growth.

Despite the problems we have encountered, 1977 was an encouraging year, confirming as it does the value of our broad spread of interests.

Group Profit Summary	1977	1976
Turnover	£6,212	5,637
Operating Profit	473	430
Profit before taxation	416	374
Net Profit attributable to B A T Industries:-		
before inflation retention	210	170
after inflation retention	158	124
Dividends	44	36
Earnings per ordinary share	62.4	51.2

Prospects

I expect all four Divisions to maintain or increase their profits before tax, but I also expect the proportion of Group taxation overall to rise from last year's lower than usual level.

The final results, expressed in sterling, will depend very much on the exchange rates ruling at the end of next September. With five months of the year behind us and exchange rates at their current levels, I believe that maintenance of last year's level of profit attributable to B A T Industries' Shareholders is as much as we can expect and that this will only be achieved with some difficulty. Nevertheless, looking beyond the immediate future, the underlying growth prospects of the business remain strong.

Peter Macadam, Chairman.



B A T INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Tobacco · Retailing · Paper · Cosmetics · Worldwide

Copies of the Report & Accounts and the text of the Chairman's speech at the Annual General Meeting are available from the Secretary, B A T Industries Limited, Westminster House, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JE.

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

International

Aircor still looking for takeover bidder

Aircor, the American manufacturer of a diversified line of industrial and medical products, says it is continuing to seek a company to make an offer for all its shares.

Several companies have shown interest and Aircor is presently involved in preliminary discussions with one company, but no offer has yet been received, Aircor said.

In London a BOC International spokesman said that the company stands by its statement of February 9 that it has no intention of selling its 49 per cent stake in Aircor.

BOC raised its holding to 49 per cent from 33.5 per cent in February by buying 1.8 million shares at 543 each. Response to the offer was so great that BOC sought Aircor board approval to tender for the rest of the shares, but this was refused.

The Aircor board said that the BOC offer was too low if it was for a complete takeover and that a price of between \$50 to \$55 a share would be fair.

Heinz problems

John Heinz expects 1978 profits to be aided by strong performance from its Heinz US division, but it is experiencing problems in its British and Canadian operations. Mr Paul Renny, director of banking and financial relations, said in New York.

Although the British unit's profits rose by 5 per cent for the nine months to January 25, grocery chain trade wars and price cutting had been hindering sales volume.

Goodyear to expand

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company of Cleveland, Ohio, says that it plans capital expenditures of more than \$400m (about £275m), up about \$100m from 1977 capital spending.

The company says that the money will be used to modernize and expand its major manufacturing and research and development facilities. This year production will begin at a new radial tyre expansion at the Gadsden plant, while in 1979 production will start at a new radial facility in Lawton.

Middenstansbank

Nederlandsche Middenstansbank NV announces in Amsterdam that it expects profits in this year to exceed the 1978m (about £248m) announced for 1977, the chairman, Mr Wim Schepershuizen Rom said in Amsterdam. It was difficult to be more specific at present because of the changing role of banks, which are expanding into new areas. The market for banking services, he thought, was not likely to expand so rapidly in future, and the planned development of a "post-bank" from the Dutch Post Office Savings Bank and Postal Giro System was a further unknown factor.

Société Generale

Net profit of Société Generale de Banque rose by 9.7 per cent to 1,600m Belgian francs (about £248m) in 1977 from 1,400m in 1976. Belgium's largest bank has announced. The bank said that it is proposing a net dividend of 204 francs a share, compared with 189 francs, for 1977.

Deposits of private customers rose by 10.7 per cent in 1977 to 357,900m francs. Deposits from the banking sector climbed 15.2 per cent to 192,200m francs from 166,800m francs.

Bank Base Rates

ABN Bank	6 1/2%
Barclays Bank	6 1/2%
Bk of Crdt & CMC	6 1/2%
Consolidated Ctdts.	6 1/2%
First London Secs	6 1/2%
C. Hoare & Co	*6 1/2%
Lloyds Bank	6 1/2%
London Mercantile	6 1/2%
Midland Bank	6 1/2%
Nat Westminster	6 1/2%
Rossminster Acc's	6 1/2%
TSB	6 1/2%
Williams and Glyn's	6 1/2%
* 7 day deposits on sums of	
\$10,000	under 3% up
to \$50,000	3 1/2% over
\$50,000 & over	4%

cat Day, April 11

§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days

[illegible]

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